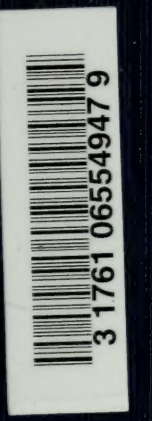
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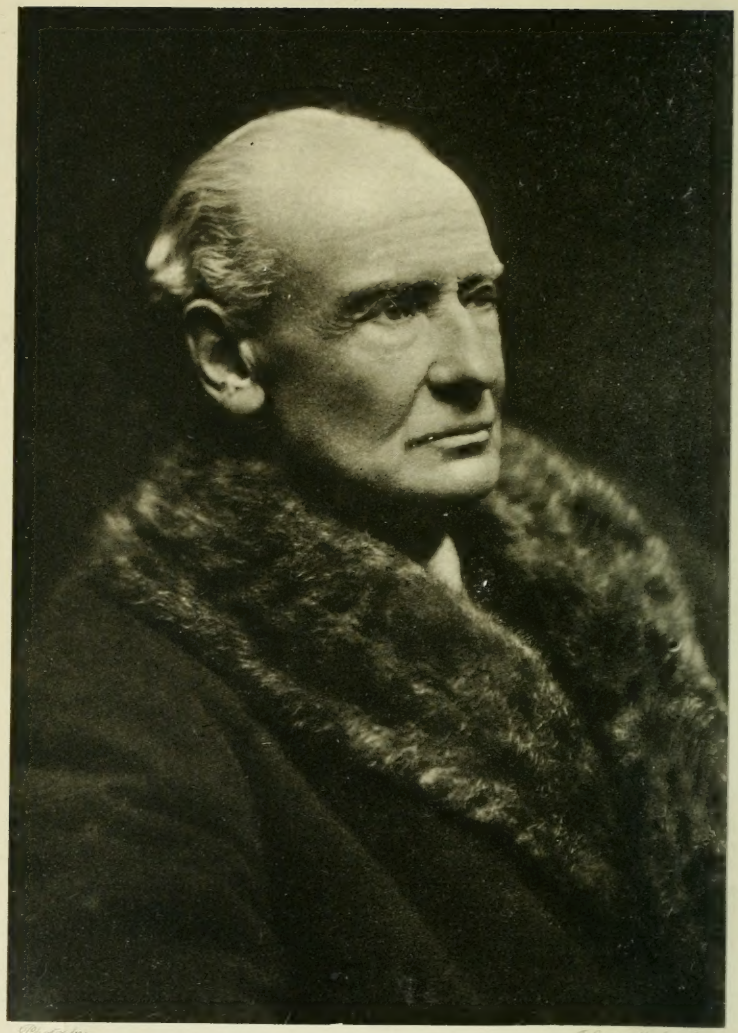
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Pictorial J. Russell Smith

Basil Wilberforce

ARCHDEACON WILBERFORCE

HIS IDEALS AND TEACHING

BY

C. E. WOODS

(*Author of the "Gospel of Rightness"*)

LONDON: ELLIOT STOCK
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To

BASIL WILBERFORCE

MY FRIEND

IN LOVE AND GRATITUDE

brief
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PREFACE

DIFFERENT writers will view Basil Wilberforce from different standpoints; the present study deals almost exclusively with his rôle as teacher of a sane yet advanced Modernism, and is the point of view taken throughout. Those to whom his High Church attachments—and they were many—chiefly appealed may prefer to ignore the Modernist and stress the Ecclesiastic. In fact, it is almost impossible to do justice to his many sides in one short volume. Suffice it if what has been said may prepare the way for a profounder study by a more competent hand. In one sense this book is a work of supererogation, since Basil Wilberforce needs no written memorial for those who knew and loved him. But there are many to whom he was but a name, and for whom his books, wide-reaching though they be, are treasures as yet unexplored. It is in the hope of securing for him a yet wider recognition and a still more grateful acknowledgment that these words have been penned.

PREFACE

We have endeavoured to present the Archdeacon's thought as much in his own words as the limits of quotation will permit. Where extensive comment appears, this has been found desirable for the purpose of emphasizing and bringing into fuller light the teacher's own meaning. For purposes of exposition we have accepted the Archdeacon's basis of thought unchallenged. He was himself entirely uncritical with regard to it. Whether wisely or not, he left the examination of fundamentals to others. His mind was not on that line. We think this critical reticence was probably justified by results. By taking current beliefs as he found them he was able to extract their mystical content, and so illumine religion for thousands in a way which would not have been possible on lines more exclusively scholarly.

Acknowledgments are due to the Editors of the *Modern Churchman*, the *Seeker*, the *Occult Review*, and *Light* for permission to make use of articles on the Archdeacon contributed by the author to their pages.

C. E. W.

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PERSONALIA

CHAPTER I

PERSONALIA

WHEN on the evening of May 13, 1916, Basil Wilberforce passed out of a frail and suffering body at the ripe age of seventy-five, there was rejoicing in many hearts at so great a liberation. His death was one of the most splendid events in a life that had always tended to great issues. He was so peculiarly a spirit designed for unfettered activities that the first emotion occasioned by his release from infirmity was deep-drawn satisfaction that he had at last come entirely into his own. No one said, "He is gone"; many, even in the midst of tears, breathed thankfully, "He is free." Such was the almost unconscious testimony to the vital temperament of a man who had realized, as few have done, the laughable impossibility of death. When on Palm Sunday, three weeks earlier, he had preached what proved to be his last discourse, many present foretold that they would hear his voice no more. Emphysema and chronic bron-

chitis had enfeebled his life for many years, and in January of last year an exceptionally severe attack of influenza had brought his forces to their lowest ebb. He rallied for some weeks, but those around him had no delusions as to his state. A second attack which his enfeebled condition was unable to resist followed in April, and ended in the " one clear call " for which he had waited during many patient years.

To speak of him with any degree of completeness involves retrospect. This will soon be done in fullness by abler hands ; in the meanwhile we will link our recent knowledge of him to the past by a few brief words. The fourth and youngest son of Samuel Wilberforce, Bishop of Oxford and Winchester, Albert Basil Orme was born on February 14, 1841, at the Close, Winchester. His delicate mother survived his birth by less than a month. She was the daughter of John Sargeant, Esq., Lavington House, Petworth, and was the youngest of a family of beautiful women, several of whom became the wives of distinguished clerics, one sister marrying Samuel Wilberforce's brother Henry, afterwards Archdeacon of West Riding, and another becoming the short-lived partner of Rev. Henry, afterwards Cardinal Manning. The loss of his wife, a woman of much charm of person and character, drew Bishop

Wilberforce towards his youngest son by associations of a peculiarly strong and affectionate nature. The celebrated Bishop of Oxford had many critics; to his son, however, he represented the ideal of tender and solicitous fatherhood. On many occasions in later life the Archdeacon has referred to his inestimable privilege in having possessed a "perfect father." To the writer he once said with emotion: "It is easy for me to believe in a Divine Incarnation, for my own father's love revealed God to me." Nevertheless the tenderest care of an overworked and much-absorbed Bishop fell short of a mother's personal guidance, and the memory of this life-long disadvantage made the Archdeacon invariably tender and lenient to those whose youth had been motherless.

As far as it was possible to do so, the care of Mrs. Sargeant, his maternal grandmother, made good the loss. On the death of her daughter she came to reside with the Bishop at Cuddesdon, where her grandson's early years were spent. From stories he has told, one gathers that he was not altogether an easy charge. He inherited much of his mother's delicacy of constitution, which did not, however, check a high and adventurous spirit. One great source of happiness was a passionate love of birds and beasts. Natural his-

tory was his delight, and its study would sometimes take an inconveniently practical form. One has heard him speak reminiscently of drawers at Eton filled with taboo live-stock; of snakes that dwelt among his shirts, and of one poignant moment when, on going up to London from school to see the Duke of Wellington's funeral, he discovered that a half-sovereign which was to have been spent on a tame rat had fallen out of his pocket. He finished the story by adding, "It was the bitterest moment I ever experienced"! All animals loved him, and over snakes in particular he possessed a power; in later life he would carry these ophidian pets entwined around his arm, and would even permit them to encircle the cradle in his nursery.

Eton was followed by Exeter College, Oxford, where he matriculated in 1860. He took his B.A. degree in 1865, graduating in the Second Class, and his M.A. in 1867. His brilliant abilities had promised better things, but Oxford had many distractions for a high-spirited youth of social distinction. It has been said that "he rode well and read fitfully," and at that time there was some paternal anxiety concerning his progress. Hunting, sports, and the "fatal facility" were certainly not ideal aids to the pursuit of scholarship.

Basil Wilberforce went up to Oxford with no clear idea of a professional career, though his many-sided temperament pointed to probable success in not a few directions. Medicine attracted him for a time, and he even went some way in the study of anatomy; he had vague thoughts, too, of the Bar. But another and a paramount decision occupied him during his last year at Oxford: at a fateful ball in Commemoration Week, 1864, he had met Charlotte Langford, daughter of Captain Netherton Langford, R.N., and niece of Dr. Leighton, Warden of All Souls, and his mind was bent on marrying as soon as he had completed his College course. In November, 1865, a few months after taking his degree, he was married to Miss Langford at St. Paul's, Knightsbridge, and entered on a union of unbroken happiness until her death in 1909.

His marriage led him to decide on taking Orders. After a course of study with Dr. King, afterwards Bishop of Lincoln, he was ordained in 1866, and immediately became his father's Chaplain and Private Secretary, as well as Curate at Cuddesdon Parish Church. He and his wife made their home with the Bishop at Cuddesdon Palace for two years, and in Cuddesdon Churchyard their infant daughter is buried. In 1868 curacies at Seaton in Devonshire, and at St.

Jude's, Southsea, gave Basil Wilberforce experience for the great work as Rector of St. Mary's, Southampton, which was henceforth to absorb many fruitful years. His appointment by his father to that important benefice at the early age of thirty received some criticism at the time, but in the event the Bishop's choice was amply justified. At first the young Rector seemed out of touch with his new flock, for the change was great from the amenities of Oxford and Southsea to a large and overcrowded shipping population. The history of his twenty-three years at Southampton, however, is a long record of spiritual activities, unremitting toil, passionate enthusiasms, and brilliant organization, while his exceptional gifts as a preacher made him a marked man throughout the diocese. To quote the picturesque language of Alfred Capper in his recently published book of recollections: "He very soon became the leading figure in Southampton, and he permeated every avenue of the local public life, flaming through the hidden ways as the Archangel Michael might have done —an absolute revelation of what an Anglican clergyman could be."

It was not long before he had to face the gravest obstacle in his ministerial career. At that time the shipping population of Southamp-

ton was under the heel of strong drink, and the primary duty of the young Rector was effectually to control the evil. This, in his judgment, could only be done by attacking it root and branch. The Total Abstinence Crusade, begun in his own parish with characteristic thoroughness, very soon extended its area, and led to the great platform work for which his name will always be remembered. In the early 'seventies the Temperance Movement was at the beginning of its intensely unpopular protest; it had had but few pioneers, and personal feelings ran high. The Rector of St. Mary's and his wife were prepared to suffer for their principles; and the difficulties of hospitality under the new régime were not the least of those they had to face in taking the uncompromising stand of total abstinence. The story of the wine-cellar that went down the gutter is, however, a fabrication which it is a pleasure to be able to deny on the Archdeacon's own authority. That story has passed currency too long.

When Basil Wilberforce first came to Southampton he lacked the breadth and spiritual tone of his maturer years. Always brilliant, and possessing a fascinating eloquence, he had yet to find his spiritual wings. His life tended somewhat to worldliness; his views had little of the

catholicity which gave so lovable a character to his later teaching. He has jestingly described himself at that period as a " High Church prig " ; we will not accept the statement too literally, for the priggishness, if it existed, was certainly evanescent. It is only natural that his religious development should unfold itself in a variety of phases corresponding with certain conspicuous landmarks in his outer life. The first of these could be noted after Samuel Wilberforce's tragic death in 1875, when the whole tone of the ministry at St. Mary's became deeper and more spiritual. Following this came a period of intense physical suffering, which he regarded in the light of a necessary discipline; he always spoke thankfully of its value in the deepening of character. For the re-establishment of his health a visit to India was recommended. This led to his acquiring an interest in Eastern philosophy which never left him, and which incalculably enriched his spiritual outlook. His intercourse with a remarkable though not very prominent thinker, Mr. W. F. Farquhar, belongs also to this period, and was another powerful influence in the development of his thought. He constantly alluded to this original and forceful personality as " my master." Mr. Farquhar himself was something of a *philosophe inconnu*, yet he influenced in the early

'eighties many of the men who have since enriched the broader thought of their day and generation. The theological daring of his volume of Essays, *The Divine Humanity*, was then regarded in many quarters with suspicion; to-day it would call for little remark. The book came to Basil Wilberforce almost in the light of a revelation, and gave him the needed impetus in the direction of theological expansiveness for which he was being inwardly prepared.

Trained in what has been called the Evangelical High Church School of his father, Basil Wilberforce's religious sympathies, aided by his own expansive temperament, could not long remain exclusive. From the saintly Bishop King he had imbibed much of that love of stately ritual and ordered ceremonial which remained with him to the end of his life. On the other hand, his emotional nature and strong attachment to personal religion, combined with an activity and eloquence that found ample scope in the Home Mission Field, led him into sympathetic touch with the great Evangelicals of the 'seventies and 'eighties, all of whom were among his friends, guests, and co-workers. His Evangelical Spiritual Mission at the Deanery brought together men of diverse views; his great Blue Ribbon Campaign, a national and far-

reaching movement, was taken up by Evangelicals throughout the length and breadth of the land. Concerning the former a Southampton Nonconformist writes: "The tent services, memorable for their evangelical fervour, will be fresh in the memories of many. Most, if not all, of the noted evangelists who took part in them have passed away, but the memories of Henry Varley, Lord Radstock, C. H. Spurgeon, Dr. McKilliam, and others, will last as long as the generation that heard them." Referring to the Canon as a temperance reformer he says: "His work in this way is an item in the social history of England in the last quarter of the nineteenth century never to be forgotten." Yet Basil Wilberforce was never an Evangelical in the general acceptation of the word; too many diverse strains went to his making. He was essentially ecclectic. Even in those days of comparative immaturity he began to acquire the width of sympathy which was his most marked characteristic in later life; he learned from every man, and counted among his warmest friends many who were his very opposites in religious and political thought.

Further years of bold platform work in support of the most pressing reforms of the day—Temperance, Social Purity, Animal Defence; a

Temperance Crusade in America, a tour in India on behalf of the Anti-Opium Crusade—then came the change which was to bring Basil Wilberforce more completely into his own. In 1894 Mr. Gladstone offered him a vacant Canonry at Westminster, with the accompanying living of St. John's, Smith Square. Since 1876 he had held an honorary Canonry at Winchester; the appointment, however, to the stall at Westminster was preferment deserved and generally anticipated.

The farewell to so devoted a parish was of a very poignant nature: it represented a break with a happy and successful past which was made only after long and prayerful consideration. One remarkable incident deserves to be specially chronicled. Before he left, his Nonconformist friends at Southampton united in a corporate farewell Communion at St. Mary's, as a recognition of the love and unity which had existed between the High Church Rector and his brethren without the pale. In a letter some three years ago to the *Daily Mail* on the Kikuyu controversy, the Archdeacon referred to this Communion as affording him the happiest day of his life. In his co-operation and sympathy with the representatives of the Free Churches in Southampton he had always been far ahead of the times. Epis-

copal displeasure did not deter him from occasionally expressing this sympathy by preaching in Nonconformist pulpits. Yet his Churchmanship was unassailable precisely because it was rooted in the Unity of the Spirit which is above all external tests of uniformity. Hence he would never be party to any proposal for Reunion which had such for its basis. He was a valued speaker at Lord Mount Temple's Conferences, when all the thinkers of the day, the men of faith and the men of reason, not to mention the leading heretics, united to discuss their differences with a view to the establishment of a common ground of reconciliation. One of his many close friends of other denominations was the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, who is said to have learned from his visits to the Deanery, Southampton, to modify the somewhat harsh opinion he had once formed of the Anglican clergy. The friendship was broken only by the steady development of the Canon's theology in what the uncompromising Calvinist stigmatized as the "down-grade" direction. The Canon had now, indeed, become one of the recognized exponents of the liberal and forward school of thought in the Church, and from thenceforth his special work was to lie in this important field.

In the year following his departure from

Southampton Canon Wilberforce was appointed Chaplain to the Speaker, an office he held by re-election until his death. Few Chaplains have filled this time-honoured post with so much dignity, grace, and distinction. He keenly appreciated the entrance it gave him to an especially congenial world. An ardent politician on the democratic side he was yet, in politics as in religion, on friendly terms with members of all shades of opinion.

In 1897 he became Select Preacher before the University of Oxford, and Archdeacon of Westminster in 1900. From that time onwards, owing to enfeebled health and other causes, his outside work gradually diminished, though up to recent years his old eloquence was occasionally to be enjoyed on a Temperance or Anti-Vivisection platform. Free from the restraints of the pulpit, his graceful gestures, abundant wit, and overwhelming flow of language were there enjoyed to the best advantage, and as a platform orator of the most absolute charm, persuasiveness and fluency he will be remembered by the thousands in many lands who have been privileged to hear him. This is not a record of his great life-work as a Temperance Reformer, else much greater stress should be laid on his gigantic accomplishments in this vastly under-estimated movement

for national self-restraint. His uncompromising attitude towards the liquor traffic met with an obloquy which he despised at its true worth; about public opinion where his convictions were concerned he cared not a feather-weight. The campaign which he started has had its day, and accomplished much of its far-reaching designs. The Archdeacon on looking back over a long life of labour in this field could acknowledge at the close that much for which he fought during the 'eighties has been accomplished in the present day, partly by legislative aid, but mainly by the slow evolution of public opinion, largely medical. Still, the national drink bill was a source of disquiet to the Archdeacon up to the close of his life, and evoked much of his old fiery censure at a time when the need for war economy is pressing hard upon the nation.

It is not, however, as a Temperance Reformer that Westminster knew him; his reputation in that line belongs to earlier days. From the very first Sunday of his new ministry in the dull Queen Anne Church in Smith Square, the vivid spiritual quality of his personality made itself felt in an ever-growing degree, until seating-room in the church became exceedingly difficult, save for early comers. Basil Wilberforce, with a name which was in itself no small asset, a golden tongue,

and a temperament that loved to champion unpopular causes, was bound in any situation to attract attention, and when at Westminster he essayed the reinterpretation of current religious beliefs his success was quite as marked as that which had attended his earlier efforts in other fields of activity.

If the value of a teacher's work may be judged by numerical standards, by the multitudes he influenced, and the geographical areas penetrated by his message, then indeed the appointment which made him Rector of St. John's as well as Canon of Westminster was justified by its results. The great message he delivered was rendered more effectual by his singularly advantageous position, for as Archdeacon of Westminster he had a practically untrammelled pulpit. "For this very reason," he once remarked, "I am especially careful to keep within my limit of free speech." And so great was the tact of this erstwhile Boanerges that he practically reinterpreted the Creed without violating the susceptibilities of the most hide-bound traditionalists.

Nature had been lavish to Basil Wilberforce. He was the last of the celebrated Wilberforces, and owed to that gifted line the qualities which contributed much to the success of his ministry.

High spiritual distinction, noble and broad humanities, courtly tendencies, acute intellect, great psychic sensitiveness, and the subtle magnetism of *personality*—all and more of these were the gift of his celebrated ancestry, and constituted indeed a goodly heritage. Added to these were an austere beauty of countenance which the marks of years and suffering served only to deepen, a singular grace and agility of bearing which falsified his seventy-five years and made him seem almost a young man to the end, and an unforgettable voice which acted almost like a mantra upon the susceptibilities of his hearers, and formed a worthy medium for the truths he taught.

These things constituted the outer expression of an inner self that was in its deeper aspects lofty, vivid, and alive to the profounder spiritual verities. But to this self, to the strong, brave, zealous, loving man whose life was a long battle with public sins, who yet enwrapped in universal charity even the most widely erring, and found nothing human alien to him except the cruel and the false—to Basil Wilberforce as God knew him it is hard to do justice in a few pages of cold print. He was no saint in the sense of being exempt from the frailties and idiosyncrasies common to all, neither was he in any sense an " other

world" devotee. Life had been good to him, and until the crushing sorrow and increasing infirmities of his later years he enjoyed it to the full. But the outer intensities of a singularly endowed nature and environment were balanced by the realization of an inner world in which lay the roots of his being. Therefore we may rightly consider him one of the great modern mystics, possessing a richness of spiritual insight which was the outcome of long practice in what he termed "thinking into God"; and because he knew experimentally whereof he spoke, his words had a power which natural eloquence may have augmented, but which it assuredly did not create. To realize God in outer consciousness, and to manifest God in outer life was the two-fold purpose behind all he said and did.

The work accomplished by the Archdeacon was no less important because it was popular in scope. His illuminating ideas travelled far beyond the reach of his voice, which, since his residence in London, was heard almost exclusively in St. John's or the Abbey pulpit. His books went everywhere, even the little periodical which contained a monthly sermon was circulated in five or six countries. Had his work been on purely scholarly lines its lasting value to the few would probably be greater, but it would assuredly have

lost in attractiveness and extent of appeal. There was a certain spiritual quality in his greater moods which gave to his sermons an intimately personal tone. He had the power of going straight to the secret places of his hearers, and answered each one's difficulties as though he were speaking to each alone. An inner sympathy existed between himself and the unique congregation he had built up during the twenty-two years of his London ministry—a sympathy so strong as to become an enabling power in the midst of physical weakness, and a sustaining love in periods of overwhelming sorrow. He was wont to say that his congregation gave him life; it is certain that on more than one occasion they kept him in the body when his frail forces had sunk to their lowest point Often he would come, crushed and worn-out, to his Sunday ministrations, to receive from his people's love an added inspiration and a renewing power. He has frequently related how, after a very serious operation that was followed by persistent and alarming insomnia, a number of working-men from his congregation at St. Mary's, Southampton, gave up a whole night to prayer that he might sleep, and by reason of the sympathy existing between him and them, the sacrifice was effectual. Their prayers and their love

did what medical aid had failed to do, and while they watched, he slept the critical sleep of returning life. One evening in London he came to his chancel steps a physical wreck. A member of the congregation, silent and unobserved, concentrated intensely on power and vitality for him, and noticed the old vigour gradually return. The next morning she received a line: "Thank you so much; it *was* you, wasn't it?"

What was the secret of this subtle link between teacher and people? The answer is easy. Quite apart from his teaching which made demands on the thought capacity of the congregation, he was himself the channel of a power that far exceeded thought, and stimulated in others their highest spiritual possibilities. We miss this indefinable property to some extent in his printed sermons; it needed the man himself to transmit the beneficent influences which made him, without exaggeration, one of the best loved public men of recent times. There are many to whom his message and his personality were reckoned among the great things in their lives, the things which will be remembered when the quick changes of our rushing epoch obliterate old landmarks, and transvaluate our ordinary sense of value. The Archdeacon belongs to that "goodly fellowship of the Prophets" (taking the word in its

literal sense of "forthteller") which has proclaimed all down the ages the spiritual nature of man, and the high destiny that follows on his high descent; and the noble insistence he laid on these teachings gave him a foremost place among the spiritual teachers of his day who attract by the intrinsic power of the truth they see, and the love they feel.

Although the Archdeacon inherited much from his famous father and grandfather, yet in some respects he went beyond them both. For he had a mystical insight and a theological daring which fitted him for the special work of our more recent years; a generation ago his words would probably have fallen on deaf ears. Nevertheless it was difficult work that he accomplished—the spiritualizing of opinion in a large section of the Christian Church,—but so well did he succeed, that to-day it is possible to state from many pulpits truths which twenty years ago would have found no hearing.

The Archdeacon's constructive instinct, which led him to be very tender even to rudimentary expressions of truth, forbade a too reckless Modernism. He loved the old forms, but was careful to emphasize that they were forms only, and, as such, in no sense binding on those for whom they may have outgrown their usefulness. Yet the

danger of a vague sublimation of truth into a sphere of bodiless unreality was never overlooked by him. "We must always have the rind to our orange," he was wont to say. Balance, the due recognition of the value of the Opposites in thought, was one of his most valuable mental characteristics. He was keenly anxious lest those whom he somewhat too flatteringly designated his "winged thinkers" should soar too early and too high—to the detriment of the wings later on. This element of caution may have been somewhat trying to the few more adventurous ones among his hearers, but it made him a safe guide for the majority, and for that majority, turning their eyes with pain and difficulty, it may be, towards an unaccustomed light, he had the tenderest and most compassionate regard. "How can I give a beefsteak to babes?" he once said, in answer to a request for the somewhat fuller development of a particular seed-thought which gave promise of a rich, philosophic yield. Yet he was good to the "winged thinkers" too, this shepherd, who invariably sank all personal considerations in the one paramount desire that the sheep should be fed.

It was an interesting and highly individual congregation that he attracted to St. John's, Westminster, consisting of many who were the out-

casts of the Churches—men and women whose faith had suffered intellectual shipwreck, who had either lost, or were afraid of losing, the old partial standpoints which had satisfied their forefathers; others who had been alienated from the Church by the puerilities and limitations of many of her accredited teachers; others, again, for whom orthodoxy had no place nor label, who held no creed save love to God and man. The majority who were Churchmen felt and appreciated the new life that was imparted to the time-honoured formularies, and realized more fully the vital reality of that "heritage of faith" in which they had been nurtured. So to all kinds, heterodox and orthodox alike, the pulpit of St. John's became a centre of life, light, and inspiration that radiated far beyond the specific locality, and made the teacher one of the most sought-for spiritual advisers in England. One great characteristic alone was sufficient to account for this; we have already referred to it. This was the intense human sympathy and all-embracing tolerance which enabled him to proclaim himself from the Abbey pulpit "an honorary member of all the religions," and bound him by ties of realized solidarity to every suffering fellow man. Intolerance in any form habitually aroused him to an honourable wrath, and the writer, in a spirit of

mischief, would sometimes descant to him on Kikuyu for the sake of provoking a characteristic frame of mind. But in his closing days he seemed to have acquired tolerance even for the intolerant.

His utter repudiation of all theology which tended to establish the essential reality of evil led him to a position of absolute optimism. He viewed with positive impatience any suggestion that the welfare of the Universe, both in its end and its becoming was in other than perfect hands. Even through the dark and perilous days of the present crisis this exalted mental attitude never for a moment abated, based as it was on a conscious realization of the presence of the Divine in all human affairs. This spirit of confidence was more than faith : it was vision. By its power countless crushed and despairing souls had been upheld in the almost unbearable agony of recent times ; to him they flocked to find the strong security of a mind that was " so very sure of God." Rich in compassion and the insight that makes men wise, during these days of universal mourning the Archdeacon rose to his great spiritual opportunity. Yet where strength demanded it he could be even severe. His recent volume, *The Battle of the Lord*, expressed his views of the present crisis in terms which some might deem almost too unyielding. There was a streak of

inflexibility in him which it was no light thing to come up against. The war aroused the spirit and temper of his old fighting days, and no challenge was ever more honourable than that displayed in the now famous sermon in Westminster Abbey on the memorable Sunday, August 2, before the Cabinet decided for war. He rallied Britain to the aid of threatened France and Belgium in words which were worthy of a place in the nation's remembrance for ever. Very stern was his attitude towards war politics generally. His clear vision quickly foresaw the consequences of vacillation, and the imperative need for a firm hand. He cried out for National Military Service long before it became an accomplished fact, and even advocated placing the country under a Dictator, and London under Martial Law.

The Archdeacon had a highly complex personality. Like all many-sided people he defied analysis; the critic who essays it finds contradictions at every turn. We will take a detached view of him as he appeared in daily life to many who knew him intimately. Possibly an all-pervading benevolence and a self-abandonment for the helping of others is the feature in the picture they would most gratefully remember; he was the great modern Apostle of Love, and aspired above all things to a realization of that

virtue in his daily life. Yet benevolence was not incompatible with a sometimes disconcerting sternness. It was tempered also in another direction by a keen and most penetrating humour which gave to his charity refreshing point and flavour. The kindest and most tenderly sympathetic of men, he was yet by no means free from a certain exalted egotism which kept him just below that true detachment which alone can win to the universal. For personality in him was so rich, so vivid, of such wide and varied content that its insistence was natural, inevitable. Everywhere he was a power. Even his stately and inimitable passage up the aisle of Church or Abbey, his possession in absolute perfection of the incommunicable secret of *bearing*, proclaimed him the born wielder of hearts. Nothing mean, common, unworthy, or undignified was ever associated with his personality. He has been fitly described as the Archmaster of the Grand Manner ; it was, let us add, the outward symbol of the grand heart and flawless upright character. And yet a close intimacy reveals the dignified ecclesiastic passing into the boyish-hearted humorist, a lover of simple things, eager to identify himself with the secular interests of the men and women with whom he came into contact ; not infallible in his judgment of them,

from a tendency always to think the best; easily deceived where his affections were concerned, and yet in some directions of a more than ordinary shrewdness; strong-willed and indomitable, but ready to yield to an appeal of love—eager, in fact, to be led by the one hand that was able to do so; nervously impatient of small ills, yet bearing with Christian fortitude a heavy weight of trial and ill-health; in private life delightfully unconventional; in public life a strict observer of decorum; a law unto himself in most things, yet in no small degree an upholder of law and order in general.

Courtly yet often abrupt; autocratic yet amenable; somewhat a victim to mood, yet of the most unfaltering optimism; widely tolerant, yet not always free from *parti pris*; a great reader, yet no student; intuitive, yet logical; in mental tendencies philosophical, yet impatient of technical philosophy; elementally simple, yet histrionic and keenly sensible of the value of an effect; in certain details meticulously exact, in others disregarding and free; in politics uncompromisingly democratic; in personal predilections relentlessly aristocratic; outwardly of the ecclesiastical type, inwardly at its opposite pole; his heart in heaven, his mind alert and mundane; to sum up in a phrase—a man in whom were

most lovably blended the lights and shadows of true genius.

Who more intensely human than he? Who more resolute in declining a pedestal? Deeply as he valued his people's love, a very genuine humility would constantly protest that it was undeserved. "I am no saint," he once expostulated; "few men are who have reached my years." It is doubtful indeed if the saintly type, as it is commonly understood, very strongly appealed to him; he was a man of the world, and owed to that invaluable training a great deal of his power of love and of insight. His home in Westminster, beautiful even in a neighhood of beautiful homes, was the centre of a rich social life, for he delighted in people, more especially people of wit and ideas. Who was there in the public world whom he did not know, or with whom he was not, himself, a *persona grata*?

His tenderness to the sufferings of animals is too marked a feature to be passed over. The work he did in the cause of animal wrongs is well known. There are many to whom the annual "animal" sermon on "Animal Sunday" was a revelation of the telling use of unconventional matter in the pulpit. On these occasions he spoke from a heart full not only of love but of

admiration for the " animals other than man," based on a long experience of devoted household pets. Whether it were the little piping bullfinch which, when he was recovering from a dangerous illness, he loved to have on his pillow, piping its one refrain, " Ich liebe dich " ; or the aged dog whose bed-time had to be mentioned in French lest he should immediately make himself invisible—the Archdeacon's pets were treated with the consideration due to friends. Each loved dog had its little tombstone in the Abbey Gardens, marked with holy words of his own choosing ; he was always pleased to tell how each pet rested at last in consecrated ground. Once the writer was with him when he discovered in the road a little pigeon that had been injured by a motor-car. Very tenderly he carried it home, and with skilful fingers set and bandaged the broken wing, caring for the bird until it was able to fly away, " which it did without one regret for me," he said half humorously. On another occasion the writer and he observed a cat seated outside an empty house. " Where's the caretaker ? " he instantly inquired. It was presently discovered that the owner was away on a holiday. The Archdeacon would not be satisfied until he had received his address, when he at once telegraphed that the cat had been left unprovided for.

Few men, perhaps, were more acutely sensitive to physical suffering. From his boyhood weak physical health had brought much discipline; he constantly admitted its value, since patience in small matters was not one of his strong points. An almost abnormal nervous sensibility accounted for moods of depression which it was exceedingly difficult to surmount: only the most repeated and determined use of spiritual affirmations could lift him above them. When in 1909 the blow fell which deprived him of his heart's devotion, life became practically ended for Basil Wilberforce. From that time onward he gave himself up almost exclusively to the helping of those in sorrow, and to the realization of that Divine Love which revealed Itself to him in fullness only after It had broken his heart. From henceforth there was little of the old brilliance, but in its stead came a depth of insight, and a power of love which was made manifest in weakness as it could never have been made manifest in strength. During his closing years he greatly increased his congregation, and doubled his literary output.

The two years of war aroused to a considerable extent the Archdeacon's failing interest in affairs, and his pulpit calls to the standard were reminiscent of the fire and vigour of younger days. It is even to be questioned whether, had he the

choice, he would not have wished to see the victory he so often and so confidently predicted. But since 1909 his devoted heart had been with its treasure in heaven, and the ever-growing reality of that other world brightened about his path until the end.

IMMANENCE AND THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

CHAPTER II

IMMANENCE AND THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

THE Archdeacon had not the temperament of the student, and he took scant delight in the reading of Theology. A firm and most loyal Churchman, he was yet a definite adherent of none of the great Church Schools. His mind lived habitually above party level, and though a keen partisan in politics, in religion he was largely a law unto himself. It was somewhat a concern to many of his critics that they were unable to label him. His reconstructive work consisted mainly in the vivid, intuitive recognition of several religio-philosophical principles of the highest importance, which his logical mind applied systematically to the whole body of Christian truth. In a word, he adopted a new basis for the Creed. Neither the principles nor their rediscovery were his, but their emphasis and application to current religious difficulties was the work for which he will always be gratefully remembered. We will note, then, a few of the main emphases for which the pulpit of St. John's, Westminster, became distinguished from other

pulpits, and the preacher from other preachers of equal eminence and piety.

The Archdeacon put first things first. In fact there was to him but one truth in the Universe. "God is all, and all is God, and God is Love," was the uncompromising basis of his faith, the ground of his ineradicable conviction that, in spite of all appearances to the contrary, all was right with the world. Within this absolute and all-explaining generalization, which in his later years he reiterated to the exclusion of every other point of view, controversies are stilled, and dogmatic niceties entirely obliterated. In the vision of all-embracing Divine Love, what room is there for lesser view-points? It becomes the great touchstone of truth; dogmas that will not stand its searching test must go; conduct that cannot face its high demands is not at Christian level. So we find the theology of St. John's pulpit coming into direct and ceaseless conflict with the conventional Deism which was the standpoint of the era when our Creeds were formed. In place of the "Mechanical Engineer, external to His Universe," the Archdeacon emphasized the conception of Divine Immanence, God the central evolving Life of humanity and all that is, the absolute guarantee of ultimate restitution and perfection,—God the

All, Omnipresent Divine Love, Which moral evil does but serve to accentuate by providing the contrast necessary to Its recognition.

"The distinction between extra-cosmic Creation and intra-cosmic Immanence is as wide as the poles.

" Creation, the idea that a creative will, with no limits to its power, built up worlds and their contents, of which He became a spectator from without, interposes an immeasurable chasm between the Creator and that which is created. The profound conception of Divine Immanence, on the other hand, sees God, not as an objective localized Person, but as a supreme self-expressing Spirit everywhere, in everything, from whose creative Mind all individual forms of existence are constantly emerging, and in which He finds self-realization. To the believer in the Allness of God, creation is not an action effected once for all, but a continuous process, the tireless self-utterance of the Divine Immanence. Every sprouting seed, every wheeling planet, every ordinary movement of the natural world, every noble aspiration of the human heart, is an expression of the energy of the ever-present, ever-active Soul of the Universe. Men are slow to grasp this conception of God as the vitally real Presence everywhere, the generating and animating power in everything, because the strongest in-

herited conviction in the human mind is the idea of separateness from God, and almost from the first the teaching of the Christ was moulded by theologians and schoolmen to fit that conception". (*The Battle of the Lord*, p. 11).

The Archdeacon may be rightly styled the Apostle of Divine Immanence. He stands alone in the extraordinary one-pointedness with which he applies this great truth to every aspect of life and faith. For him it was absolute. "It linked all perplexing meanings into one perfect peace," affording alike a basis for the highest Christian ethic, and the soundest Christian philosophy. No one who has listened attentively to Archdeacon Wilberforce could fail to note that what he taught was equally a religion and a philosophy. Religion, he would say, has no profounder function than to stimulate that faculty of the soul whose very essence is thought. For the Spirit "which impels all thinking things, all objects of all thought," is itself both the goad and the goal of the mind's aspiring, and feeds the thought-capacity of man no less surely than his heart and emotions. Christianity, therefore, in so far as it is a systematized expression of divine truths, must be amenable to the laws of philosophic thought, however widely it may, as a whole, transcend philosophy strictly so-called.

The Archdeacon's Immanental God-conception had a threefold implication—

(*a*) That God is the root, substance, and reality of all that is.

(*b*) That this root, substance, and reality is Love.

(*c*) That the essence of Love is a dynamic and ceaseless self-expression in action.

A threefold implication which, when realized and incorporated into the theory and practice of religion, brings the believer into a new world. The " Lord of Hosts " of Jewish Deism, of which so much of our current Christianity is a prolongation in modern terms, has gone ; He is extraneous to His world, ruling it from a transcendent height, interfering in wrath or in mercy with His own decrees, a great Potter making or breaking the clay as it seems good to Him : such a God has little or no affinity with the Immanent Love Principle dwelling everywhere—in mineral and crystal and vegetable and animal, but above all in Man. Such a God is being fast relegated to the limbo of rudimentary superstition ; comparative religion has traced for us His genesis in the primitive instincts of mystery, fear, and need. For two thousand years His shadow has been cast athwart the purest pages of the Christian records ; in Germany Kultur still kneels at His footstool. But His hour has struck, and He will

soon go the way of those other rudimentary gods for whose worship, in olden days, He so jealousy substituted His own. The Archdeacon was foremost among the many philosophic mystics who have sought to widen and deepen the current God-conception. Immanence brings God to the very core of the world; I am in contact with Him in all familiar things. They are because He has first thought them, and by the dynamics of His thought they acquire the stability and coherence which keeps them in their accustomed forms. It is true that my consciousness lends two-thirds of reality to the objects around me; nevertheless there is an unknown third which is independent of me, which I come up against and find awaiting my mental pronouncements. Between this non-mental reality and its phenomenon in my consciousness is a link of unbreakable reality and uniformity; the stimulus of the same object-world invariably gives rise to the same effect in consciousness. But I know nothing of the object in itself, or whether it transcends or is conterminous with its effects. I have no means of knowing whether my senses' report concerning it is—as Prof. Clifford once put it—of the nature of a portrait or a map. But if God's Immanence is the only reality in the Universe, I can at least assert with regard to

the object-world that its permanence, independence, and stability, its power of always arousing in me the same response, is due to its being an actual part of the Divine Consciousness. I find the "Eternal Thinker, and His non-eternal thoughts" in all my contacts with the natural world. In matter and its myriad forms I am sensing what the Alexandrians termed the *Logos Proforikos*, and the Universe becomes to me a sacred place, the familiar glows with an unaccustomed light, when I am thus able to relieve this crux of philosophic inquiry by the simple answer "God."

Here is the place to remove, if possible, a misconception that has risen in many quarters with regard to the relation of Immanence to Theism. Pantheism is heresy to Christian Theologians, and the border-line between Immanence and Pantheism is very difficult to determine and very easy to overstep. The Archdeacon has been labelled among other things a Pantheist because of the one invariable text of his teaching, the Allness of God. We must, however, distinguish, as he did, between the form of Pantheism which identifies God with, *and limits Him to*, His manifestations, and that higher form of the teaching which makes the self-identification dependent on an act of Divine Volition. The Archdeacon was

careful never to allow his theology to become unbalanced; he sought ever to arrive at a synthesis in which both Pantheism and Theism *exist as reconciled opposites*. Examine for a moment the metaphysical difficulties which beset each point of view when considered alone. Pantheism as popularly interpreted, tends to identify God with, and absorb Him into, the Universe; He is unthinkable apart from the limited phenomena of natural existence by which His self-expressions are determined. Theism, on the other hand, with the conception of God as the Eternal Subject, confronts Him with an object-world, a not-God, which is separated from God by *essential difference of nature*. How then can the two unite in a workable relation? We recognize, of course, the possibility of the union of contraries, but such union takes place only between those natural contraries which are in reality complementaries; it is unthinkable between terms that are separated by elemental difference in *essence*. On such a hypothesis the gulf between God and not-God appears to be unbridgable; indeed, from the standpoint of the Allness of God it is difficult to see how these opposites can exist at all. And if we assert that the difference between God and the world is one not of inner essence but of outer expression, we have

conceded to Pantheism all that is asked. Or to put the problem in another way: Whence comes the Universe? From God? Then, since like obviously produces like, the Universe will partake of the Substance of its Source, and its distinction from Him will be one of expression, rather than of essence. But this is Pantheism. If we answer—from a source other than God, then we abandon Monism for an inadmissable Dualism, and preserve the Transcendence of God at the cost of His Absoluteness.

The Archdeacon's answer to this crux of Theology is somewhat as follows: God being the One Substance out of which the worlds have emerged, matter in its essence is, in a sense, Himself, since He had nothing in the beginning save Himself out of which to create the Universe. Therefore Matter, far from being unreal and alien to God, contains at its root the One Reality. But God is of necessity identified with His own Substance; and since He has willed that the Universe shall proceed therefrom, He is identified also with the Universe. *But He wills the identification.* This point is of the first importance. By recognizing Will behind the self-evolution of Divine Substance, and by showing God as the Author and Finisher of His own processes, it differentiates what is termed the Higher Pantheism from that

view which tends to lose God in His world, and saves His Transcendence, while allowing full scope for His Immanence. The closest analogy we can find to the conception is that of the relation of a man's consciousness to himself, a relation so close as to be one practically of identity. And yet consciousness, which is impermanent and under voluntary control, is not the self, though the self when devoid of it is deprived of the primary element of selfhood. "The Logos," says the Archdeacon, "is the Consciousness of God"; and the Logos, in one of Its aspects, is the Universe.

Theism does not go far enough in the direction in which Pantheism goes too far, therefore a very careful balance of thought is needed to do justice to the partial view of each by uniting both in a higher synthesis. This we think the Archdeacon accomplished. So widely did he universalize the Mystic Christ that the conventional view of Him as the Eternal Mind in action was shown to be inadequate; He must also be the Divine *Thought*, the Content of the Unmanifest revealed in the sum-total of creaturely existence. "God's thought of Himself is the Logos; when He thinks that thought it becomes differentiated into the phenomena of the Universe and into Man". (*There is No Death*, p. 49).

And in the sermon on the Miracle of the Quelling of the Storm he says : " Does it sound a parodox to say that ' He who arose ' was both the storm and the queller of the storm ? An Oriental mind would take the thought in a moment. He, the Logos, the Self-Utterance of the Absolute, is the immanent energy of the Universe. He is that all-inclusive Spirit whose consciousness is everywhere. The Universe with its unerring, unalterable, regularized working is one aspect of the consciousness of the immanent Word or Logos. Not an atom of matter, not a wave of the sea, not a force in Nature, not an electron in the Cosmos ever has been, or ever could be unfilled, unpossessed by the Word or Self-Utterance of the Absolute ". (*New Theology*, p. 50).

The recognition of the two aspects of the Logos as Thinker and Thought, Utterer and Utterance, Mind and Idea, God and His Consciousness, helps to resolve a theological antithesis which has given rise to much controversy all down the ages. The Bhagavat Gita sums up the position in a line : " I establish the Universe with a single portion of Myself—and remain."

And the Archdeacon : " The miracle of Cana corrects Pantheism, the most fascinating of all the half-truths, by showing the Logos as a Person

manipulating Nature from outside, while embodied in a part of the very nature He was manipulating". (*New Theology*, p. 3).

Thus we are given a vital philosophy of Creation—a conception of the Universe as God-ensouled, living in all its aspects, " every atom, every germ having within it a principle, a purpose, a degree of consciousness appropriate to its position in the scheme of things" (*Mystic Immanence*, p. 11), —a Universe, moreover, as necessary to, and as much a part of the method of Divine Manifestation as the Humanity it ultimately produces. The application of Immanence to the world of matter justifies the belief of poets and mystics in a Cosmic Consciousness, shared in some dim way by even the lowest kingdom in Nature. It shows us " evolution as the process of life everywhere, and opposition to a contrary as the inevitable law of its working."

But another and deeper thought also emerges. The Logos as Divine Immanence is bound eternally to suffer in and for the Universe which His Love is ceaselessly evolving from Himself as central Germ. In Matter God is sub-conscious ; in Man He expresses self-consciousness ; in Himself He is super-conscious. But the veiling of that Super-consciousness in the lower kingdoms is a voluntary sacrifice, a Cosmic Crucifixion so stu-

pendous as to demand our actual reverence for a world in which God has seen fit to become self-determined. In that world He lives and energizes, while retaining complete independence of the forms wherein He is hidden, bearing the perpetual Passion of a Love that stoops to the lowest limit of matter, that through the grave and gateway of matter He may ultimately raise Creation to a new and a diviner status. (*See* sermon on "God lays down His Life" in volume *New Theology*).

God thus acts in Nature by a twofold process of limitation and delimitation. By the first the worlds are created, by the second they are or will be recreated. May we liken the process to contraction from without inward, followed by expansion from within outward? But under whatever figure we seek to express it, difficulties will arise from our unavoidable use of space terms. All forms of Immanental teaching are open to this objection; they give too great an objectivity to the categories of Time, Space, and Becoming. The world is equally within God as God is within the world, and the true relation is probably inexpressible by any kind of preposition. How keenly St. Augustine appreciated this is shown in his restless questioning of the Allness of God: "Do Heaven and Earth then contain thee, since Thou fillest them? Or

dost Thou fill them and overflow, since they do not contain Thee? And whither dost Thou overflow when Heaven and Earth are filled? Or because all things cannot contain the whole of Thee, do they receive a part of Thee, and do all receive the same part at the same time? Or does each receive its own part, greater things a greater part, lesser things a lesser? Then is one part of Thee greater, another less? Or art Thou wholly everywhere, though naught receives the whole of Thee?"; (*Confessions*, p. 34). A curious instance of the absolute dominance of a great religious mind by the space concept.

Immanence, however, may be de-spatialized, and its essence expressed in terms of mode and relation. It is a mode of Divine working that is direct, central, and dynamic. It suggests the ceaseless passing from latency to patency of a hidden Reality which is none the less as perfect in Its hiddenness as It will be in the highest of Its ultimate manifestations, but perfect after another mode. This vital, ceaselessly active Perfection is central to every atom of the Universe, but It limits Its manifestations in varying degree in each great natural kingdom. We call these limitations the matter of the kingdom, and become acquainted with the life-processes only at the point

at which they cease to reveal themselves more fully along a given line.

But however we may prefer to state the doctrine of Immanence, whether as a space relation or as a mode of Divine activity, there remains the great practical fact that all life, all movement of becoming, all moments of process are God's self-expression in forms which He has Himself evolved. And since for the Archdeacon the One Life is also the One Love, then Love is the most utterly inescapable thing in the Universe. The metaphysical implications of the pulpit of St. John's, which were sufficiently marked to require the foregoing chapter of exposition, give way at this point to the pure spiritual beauty of the Gospel of Love. If the Archdeacon occasionally raised debatable philosophical issues, no elements of uncertainty, indefiniteness, or controversy ever marred the limpid clearness of his spiritual vision. In language of inspired simplicity he reiterated Sunday after Sunday the only truth in the world—that "measureless Love, linked to Omnipotent Purpose, enspheres our whole being," and is the cause, the sustaining power, and the ultimate explanation of all that is. It is operating, ceaseless, and unseen, in every detail of human life; circumstances, indeed, are the outward signs of its inward activity. Even

the dark things of the world,—wrong, oppression, crime, destitution, misery, loss, sickness, disaster,—the ills, in short, which hide from us the face of Love—are often Love's most potent opportunity. To see this as the Archdeacon saw it was hard for many who had not his faith, to whom the facts of experience were often overwhelmingly contrary to the great assurances of this Apostle of Love. Yet he was at all times willing to face experience with philosophic honesty, while retaining his intuitive certainty of the Allness of Divine Love, and its parental responsibility for the laws which give rise to evil in all its forms. From that fundamental position he would not have wavered had the very Universe collapsed in chaos. It offers "the only working explanation of the phenomenon called evil, and it is from this standpoint alone that any man can logically and hopefully struggle against it. When once you have grasped the universality and perfection of God, and have cured yourself of the tendency to make mental exceptions, you will have recognized that any definition short of 'God in all and all in God' virtually annihilates the conception of Omnipotence; . . . you will recognize the logical impossibility of any essence, person, matter, spirit, principle co-existing in antagonism to the resistless omnipotence of God for even the frac-

tion of a second. You believe, without a shadow of mental reservation, that in all the apparent contradiction and paradox there is only one love pulsing, only one purpose evolving, only one end possible. . . . You perceive that there cannot be good without an opposite whereby to recognize it ; . . . that contradiction is a condition of all life, physical, moral, spiritual, that the tare is necessary to the wheat ". (*Sanctification by the Truth*, p. 69).

He who is ultimately responsible for " bringing every son into glory " is responsible necessarily for the process by which this end is accomplished. A saying often on the Archdeacon's lips was : " God cannot make anything—least of all a human being—save by the process by which a thing becomes what it is." Now process involves development by opposition to a contrary. Its early stages of struggle, failure, and sin will appear to make against the end for which the process was designed. In the long run, however, even moral evil will be overruled, and made to subserve the Divine purpose for man. Otherwise we should have to admit the impossible, namely the defeat of Omnipotence. The goal of evolution might, conceivably, have been reached at the outset, without its suffering process, in which case the ills consequent on ignorance and imperfection would not have been.

But man would not then have been man. To become perfect at once without knowing to the full the lesser experiences which go to the making of the Perfect Experience—without which the Perfect could not be,—this would have been the painless method of Creation, but would it have been the highest? For a very little experience teaches us that to *win* perfection is far greater than to receive it, even though the Giver be God Himself, even though all the vicissitudes of process are necessary to the winning. For it is to process that is indirectly due every ill that flesh is heir to, as well as most of its good. God cannot therefore be said to "send" the tragedies that darken human life; what He is unfalteringly responsible for is the law by which these things happen, the law which demands that so-called evil shall follow relentlessly on ignorance, imperfection, and self-will. He "permits" the law; He "endures" the consequences, suffering with the sufferer in an intensity proportionate to His infinite sensibility. Were His Love allowed to reign unchecked in human affairs, or in the individuals by whom affairs are determined, misery, disaster, and sin would cease to be. But Divine Love is baulked by human ignorance and human perversity, and both these prolific causes of suffering are the results of the essential law of

life, development. The winning to knowledge is a slow process, and a yielded obedience to knowledge a slower process still. Yet the speeding up of the process is largely in our own hands. Evolution is primarily a law independent of us; ultimately it calls for our free-will to arise and control the very law by which we have been determined. Until this happens we shall suffer; but the whole energy of Divine Love, we are assured, is bent on our extracting from the suffering its power and purpose, and so ending the ignorance that made it possible.

To work *ab extra* upon untoward phenomena, or to check by so-called miracle the working out of consequence from causes, has never been God's method for the human family. As the Archdeacon has well put it: "If an objective world-ruler, from motives of compassion, were to intervene to save men from the results of inattention, or disobedience to recognized laws of nature, it would reduce mankind to a condition of sterile indolence or hopeless uncertainty. It is of the utmost educational value that effects, however painful, should always follow causes. Experience may be a hard school, but it is Abba Father's school. If He had made man automatically perfect from the first like a correct chronometer, man would have been innocent, but he could

never have become a moral being. The only school of character is the incontrovertible axiom that effects must follow causes". (*Spiritual Consciousness*, p. 11).

In another passage he puts the argument for evil equally concisely.

"God is the perfect goodness; all in first causes is from God, therefore evil, however degrading its conditions, is, after all, a lower good, the excreta of good, the soil in which good is planted. As evil is here, as evil is conquerable, it is manifest that exposure to its bias, its contradiction, is an inseparable condition of moral life. God could not make a moral being who has struggled and conquered, without giving him something to struggle against and to conquer. That the divine sonship may be born from above, and trained into perfection, we have been projected into the disorder of the earth conditions in which we find ourselves. They are puzzling, discordant, painful, but they must be best, or they would not be. And the faculty of responding to the highest, or turning away from our peace, is the sphere of our education, to be followed by the exact consequences of the deeds done and the affections cherished during our life in the flesh."

The law of development by contrast which is true for character, is equally true for the attain-

ment of real happiness. The unclouded brightness of childhood is a state which none who have tasted the mixed experiences that make a wise maturity would regard as ideal perfection. For the happiness that knows no other state is incomparably lower than that which is born of knowledge of a contrary. Only the latter kind is *realized* happiness. It often happens, therefore, that in our education in self-knowledge we are taught the true meaning of happiness by being deprived of it.

The foregoing imperfect summary represents the Archdeacon's standpoint with regard to the problem of pain. He saw the necessity of viewing life from an immense radius. Only so does the mystery come into perspective. What if for many tragedy and loss bring no fruitful experience. Perfect through suffering *will* be true at long last for each one, as it was true of the Perfect Son, though other ages and other disciplines may be needed to complete the work but imperfectly begun here on earth. The laws of life were the same for Christ as for ourselves ; He showed mankind where the Via Crucis invariably leads. But it is obvious and natural that poor humanity should be blinded by its tragedies to their larger issues. How tenderly sympathetic was the Archdeacon's attitude to such is shown by the vast number of mourners who went to him for unfail-

ing consolation. He made them see that Abba Father was not only at the heart of their sorrow, He *was* the sorrow, as well as the law that had caused it; He was also the exceeding great consolation ready to be born from that sorrow as soon as their receptivity made consolation possible. His immanental conception of God removed Him from a throne somewhere in a far distant heaven to become the central Spirit in all things, travailing in pain in the souls and bodies of men. "The certain knowledge that God dwells in us assures us of the perfect sympathy, the actual identity of feeling on the part of the Immanent Spirit with every sorrow, anxiety and pain that can possibly afflict us, and we should be convinced that each experience of human anguish is the Almighty Ephphatha, putting sacred fingers into deaf ears of some dormant potentiality buried in flesh, that it may come forth into spiritual consciousness. . . . Divine Love within us and around us is saying Ephphatha to our hearts, bidding us rise out of fear and feel God 'closer to us than breathing.' If we obey the voice . . . there will come, in the midst of sorrow and anxiety, a profound 'rest in the Lord,' and we shall not be afraid of any evil tidings, for our hearts will stand fast in the Lord". (*The Purpose of God*, p. 81).

THE SPIRITUAL NATURE OF MAN

CHAPTER III

THE SPIRITUAL NATURE OF MAN

THE Archdeacon's eloquent assurances reached their high-water mark when discoursing on the spiritual nature of man, and the guarantee it provides of absolute Universalism. In this inspiring subject, surely Christ's most precious legacy to humanity, he was always at his best. At the risk of over-emphasizing a fundamental teaching, it is well to elucidate this conception still further, and to make yet more firm the grounds on which he based his belief in a heavenly destiny for all, without reservation or exception. The heavenly destiny was determined by the heavenly nature, which, hidden, undeveloped, often thwarted, but ultimately irresistible, is the life of God in man, a seed of omnipotence which cannot eventually suffer defeat; the logical *sequitur* of the Immanental doctrine, therefore, is Universalism in its most uncompromising form.

"Every child born into the world is a word of

the Father made flesh, and destined to transcend its conditional state and be made perfect ". (*Steps in Spiritual Growth*, p. 9).

" There will ultimately be a perfected humanity, though many centuries may have to roll by first. The day will come when the originating Spirit will see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied. This final consummation can only come in one way, namely, by the general recognition and acceptance of the fact that man's true life is the life of God in man ". (*Spiritual Consciousness*, p. 10).

In other words, divinity in the Parent implies divinity in the offspring. St. John's pulpit sounded the mystic message of Divine Sonship with an almost overwhelming insistence. Other teachings based on Immanence may have had a more speculative value ; the Gospel of Man as a Son of God with all the forces of the Kingdom of Heaven at command by the inalienable right of spiritual heredity rang true to the deepest intuitions both of preacher and hearer, and was uttered in season and out of season. " Son, thou art ever with me, and all that is mine is thine " was the substance and ground of his divine hopefulness concerning the human race. The life of God and the life of man are eternally one, and to separate Him from the humanity He indwells is

the one impossibility in a Universe in which nothing is impossible save that God's purposes shall fail.

It was a Gospel of Triumph; it was also a Gospel of Warning. To it he brought all his powers of exhortation and exposition, for so great a truth needed to be made crystal clear. It was peculiarly liable to misconception. Divine sonship is very far from being the realized truth of the *outer* man. He has yet to win to his divinity; it is within him as a hidden treasure, an unworked mine of precious ore, a heritage which will enrich him only as he makes it the great fact of his outer life. A fact of being is not necessarily a fact of consciousness. Our innate divine nature is an unalterable fact of being, but it is not truly valid until it has become a fact of consciousness, the actually realized possession of the whole man. Till that has been attained, he cannot be truly said to possess himself.

Life is a training-school in the science of self-realization, of which the main lessons are discrimination, negation, and affirmation. Of these the first is perhaps the most difficult. Discrimination shows man the hidden secret of himself, and gives him the clear vision to distinguish between his as yet potential greatness, and the

bundle of hereditary weaknesses, limitations, conflicting desires, obscuring prejudices which make up his surface consciousness. Hard indeed is the first step in self-knowledge, for the mind of the flesh which is our normal consciousness is easily mistaken for the Mind of Christ, which may not yet have arisen above the far horizon of the inner life. But until the Mystic Christ has been felt and known its existence within can only be affirmed by faith, and "faith cometh by hearing." Exhortation and exposition are thus the necessary preparations for the mystic awakening. This on the part of the preacher. We will give some illustrations of the power and clarity with which he fulfilled this primary duty to his congregation—

"Man is complex," says the Archdeacon; "he has within him three functioning centres, one of which is wholly and irrevocably omnipotent. Man is spirit, soul, and body. Spirit is the seat of his God-consciousness, soul is the seat of his self-consciousness, body is the seat of his sense consciousness. In the spirit God dwells, in the soul self dwells, in the body sense dwells". (*Spiritual Consciousness*, p. 132).

"There are within us two originating founts of knowledge Paul differentiated them sharply as, one, the carnal mind, meaning the intellect

alone, and the other the Christ Mind, meaning the Spirit ruling the intellect. . . . My hereditary flesh-nature is soul in which is intellect, and body in which is appetite. But is that all of me ? No, indeed. There is in me a potentiality of wisdom, inherited from Infinite Mind, which awaits the action of my will upon my thought-faculty to become awakened spiritual consciousness ruling the whole man ". (*Ibid.*, p. 142).

" Jesus proclaimed from His inmost consciousness, ' I am the Son of the Father, God ' . . . ye also are sons as I am. Sonship is a fact of your being, though not yet a fact of your consciousness. What you *are* is a fact of your being. What you know of what you are will be the gradual instructing of your consciousness. Man and his consciousness are not necessarily co-extensive. The road to this is by doing the will ; do the will and you will know of the doctrine ". (*Sanctification by the Truth*, p. 193).

Exhortation having awakened faith, and faith discrimination, the practical steps in Self-realization are now to be taken. They consist in affirming the true Self, and in negating the false. An easy process ? One rather that demands the most constant, watchful and tireless asseveration of the truth as it has been revealed to the hearer's awakened intuition. Affirmation is the

actual alteration and transvaluation of the hitherto accepted standards of life, the strong purposeful denial of one set of experiences and impressions, and an immediate determined affirmation of others. It means identifying the self with the God-nature. This inner denial is the only asceticism which the Archdeacon recognized as being on Christian lines. "Except a man deny himself he cannot be my disciple."

He interpreted the term literally. To deny the self is sturdily to refuse to be identified with that lower mental and appetital nature whose centres are the brain and sense-organs, whose motives of action are the gratifying of the lower surface consciousness. Which means, of course, that the animal-mental person is to be denied *as the true self*. But he is not to be disregarded or put out of court in any other sense, because his existence is essential to the expression of the spiritual consciousness, which seeks to *rule the whole man*. When the whole nature is rightly orientated, every aspect comes into its proper place. There is strictly no lower and no higher in the man who is controlled from the Christ-centre within. It is the great unifier. A life that is lived from the flesh-level is wrong not because it is fleshly but because it is limited to the flesh standpoint, and vitalized from the flesh

centre. Its *principle of identification* is false. But the man who dares to take his stand on God as his true and only Self may use both mind and flesh as freely as he will, for he is standing above them as master, neither acknowledging their authority nor allowing their power. Such a one may act *in* the flesh as much as seems to him good, since he does not act *from* the flesh. True self-denial, therefore, means the shifting of the sense of identity from the mind to the spirit. It is negation only in its lower aspects; the higher process is one of affirmation.

"An affirmation," says the Archdeacon, "is a determined and reiterated assertion, even in the face of all apparently contradictory evidence, and whether at the time you feel it or not that a thing is so. It is a mental process to which in time the molecules of the brain will respond. . . . Affirmation is a process of self-treatment. Affirmations do not of course alter in the slightest degree God's attitude towards us, that never requires alteration, but they do change, by force of habit, our attitude towards God". (*Power with God*, p. 169).

They do even more than this. They enable the mind to fix on the power of Divine Immanence, and call it into operation. With this result, that when believed in, appealed to, trusted,

the Christ-nature within will take control of the outer life. And when this happens one acts without being oneself the actor, allowing a greater, wiser Power below the fretted surfaces of the mind to order the life aright. This will happen apart from any knowledge on the part of the surface mind of the subliminal process of control, save that the Immanent Actor may be trusted to succeed where the outer self is impotent. Success, too, will be effortless and natural, just the sweeping away of obstacles, or their conversion into means. Sometimes a difficulty that once loomed large will cease any longer to be difficult, and a task which we despaired of performing will get itself done by no conscious activity of the outer self. The secret is this: a power has been invoked in spiritual Affirmation which can never fail because its source is the Infallible. It is the one primary cause of all true attainment. Affirmations call it out of the hiddenness. But in order to invoke it effectually the self must be absolutely yielded. It must become the instrument rather than the actor. The reason why so few lives are at high spiritual level is because they have not yet effected this essential change in mental attitude. "Call on the Immanent Divine Spirit to live His life in you," was the Archdeacon's most persistent injunction; "let

Him carry you through the day, be your active principle, your wisdom, your right thought. Commit your outer self to be the channel of His action, and then cease from anxious care about the difficulties of your day. It will be marvellous how you are brought through." Appeal to the Immanental Self as the true Actor is the road to inward tranquillity, and has seldom been known to fail where the requisite trust and abandonment are found. Moreover it brings the Archdeacon's teaching to the bar of actual experiment. He was ever solicitous that what was to him so precious a reality should be of real practical worth in the lives of others. "Is there anything really practical in this "mystery of God," he once asked, "or is it just all words, words? It is intensely practical if it is believed, not held merely intellectually, if it is gripped, appropriated by a strong mental act of repeated affirmation. Indeed, there are darknesses in human lives for which it is the only remedy. I know a few who, like Paul, are able to use it. When the soul is wrung with sorrow, when the body is crushed by pain, they are able to affirm with intense meaning, "I have within me, deeper than all else, an intense life which nothing can touch, . . . and then there comes a strange mastery over external things, and over the poor,

infirm, suffering mortal self". (*Secret of the Quiet Mind*, p. 24).

Auto-suggestion in its spiritual aspect, it may be said. True, but what of the Principle which responds with a power that is limited only by the intensity of the suggestion? The subliminal mind of ordinary psychological science is far from being wise with the wisdom of *this* Power; its quality of manifestation depends on the *nature* of the suggestion given, whether wise or foolish. But the Immanent Self, though dependent on appeal, is independent of the nature of the appeal; it acts from a level of wisdom of which the outer self can form no conception, and over which it certainly can obtain no control. The utmost the outer self can do—and this appears to be necessary—is to suggest wisdom to the Immanental Self; the *form* in which the wisdom will manifest is quite beyond the outer self's imagining, and asks for the profound simplicity of trust. For trust is a most important psychological condition; it prevents confusion between inner and outer, spiritual and mental processes which those will understand who realize the dependence of Immanental activities on spiritual laws of a highly subtle character. The Christ Mind, to use the Archdeacon's favourite term, though infallible in source, demands unin-

terrupted freedom of action. Its results may be seriously hampered by confusion of suggestion on the part of the outer self, the mind of the flesh,—such, for example, as an affirmation that is immediately followed by a negation which kills the affirmatory effect. For the two minds work by different modes; when both are equally active together counter-action ensues, and there is failure. Trust implies *a cessation of counter-suggestion on the part of the outer self*; having made his appeal and indicated its direction he no longer concerns himself with results, or even with the processes by which results are attained. He has negated himself. But when trust is absent, the outer self falls into the fatal error of adding his own mental activities to those of the Christ-Self which his suggestion has called into operation, ignorant that spiritual and mental processes invariably cancel one another.

We suggest this consideration in defence of the Archdeacon's teaching in cases where it may have seemed to fail. None knew better than he that the mind of the flesh is an enemy of the Christ Mind hard indeed to scotch, and none the less an enemy when most anxious to work as an ally. The one thing it *will* not do is to cease working altogether.

But the Archdeacon's Gospel was one also of

warning. He knew that even the fringe of higher knowledge implied a corresponding responsibility, and that with increasing possibilities of attainment came increasing possibilities of failure. He was sometimes overwhelmed by the awfulness of the Immanental idea. "Is there any peril, think you, in this transcendent truth? Any risk in being an initiate into this mystery of 'Christ in us the hope of glory?' There is; there certainly is. This share of the Christ that dwells within must, if we continuously disobey its promptings, become our enemy, because it is so inexorably our friend. If we know that the Christ nature is in us, we cannot hide ourselves in our Lord's petition, 'Father, forgive them; they know not what they do.' For if we are initiates, we do know.

"No life can lie so close to the life of the everlasting as our God-inhabited lives do lie without 'Christ in us' being our perpetual help or our perpetual condemnation, our joy or our terror. That is the true meaning of the Christ coming in judgment. The great White Throne is not some incident in the dim future; it is now within us. We are predestined to be conformed to the image of the objective Jesus. The subjective, indwelling Jesus-nature is doing that work within us. . . . We cannot finally frustrate it, but we

can hinder it for a time, quench it for a while; but continuously to oppose to it our human freedom of choice is to court the discipline of 'salvation yet so as by fire,' the consuming fire of burning love". (*Secret of the Quiet Mind*, p. 26).

This thought has profound suggestions. The transference of the Coming of the Son of Man in Judgment from the exoteric to the esoteric plane of interpretation gives significance to the warnings uttered by Jesus in reference to this event. It is almost as though the inexorableness of the laws governing the manifestation of the "Christ in us" placed the unguarded soul in a position of actual peril lest that which is a savour of life unto life become, under wrong conditions, equally a savour of death unto death. The striking of the hour for the liberation of the Spirit should find a prepared soil, a cleansed vessel, an attuned and harmonious instrument. And if not? One hardly dares to say. There is no damming or holding back the divine outpouring, and its descent upon an unprepared heart may give rise to that mysterious condition described by the Apostle as "spiritual wickedness in high places." It is as dangerous to play with the Spirit of God as to toy with the lightning-flash. The sword of the Spirit is two-edged; it is death-dealing and life-giving; it plays equally in the forces of

darkness as in the angels of light. Its activity, misdirected and abused, is seen in many of the human fiends who have darkened the records of history, for all power is of the Spirit, and power misapplied is of the Spirit still. Let us get rid of the idea that the spiritual life is essentially the holy life. It should be so; the fruits of the Spirit are a pure and lovely chain of qualities which the universal instinct of mankind assures us are the highest things, the divine, the god-like—in a word, the spiritual. But these things are *fruits*, and the fruits are the result of an essence of power energizing and fertilizing a prepared soil. The same power that nourishes a garden of fair seeds will also fertilize the noxious weeds that lurk in its unseen places. So when Christ declares the Judgment of the Son to be a day of destruction, of iniquity, of tribulation, and the rampant starting into life of interior, nameless evils, we understand what He means. These things will not happen because the Spirit is in itself evil, but because it is the compelling force of manifestation, the revealer of hearts, a power which nothing that has the germ of life can withstand, for life must answer to life. Since the graves shall yield their contents at the voice of the Son of Man, it may be well to look into the nature of their secret things ere the day of the

revealing come, for it will come and not tarry.

A sane optimism with regard to man's ultimate destiny was thus compatible with a clear recognition of the gravity of human responsibility. Responsibility may be defined as a man's ability to respond, but our use of the ability is our own, and it cannot be forced. God coerces no man, though He allures by the ceaseless play of a love that *will* not let us go. That we do not always respond is due to our lack of sensitiveness to the lure; we have not the length of vision which sees the end of splendour to which it fain would draw us. The Archdeacon found the root of all sin to consist in ignorance of our highest good.

> "Know this, oh man, sole root of sin in thee
> Is not to *know* thy own divinity."

The quotation was ever on his lips.

Since, however, the will is the ground of every ethical consideration, the kind of ignorance that is sin is that in which a man has known, but has deliberately allowed himself to forget. No one is to be blamed for what he never really knew. But to know and to *realize* are two entirely different things, and it takes the hard blows of experience to bring home to most people that sin is a man's worst enemy. Realization can never be taught by precept. It is being rather than knowledge. It must come even-

tually to all, in some condition, here or hereafter, for to this end all experience is designed, and God's ends are always attained. And when it arises in the soul there is an end of sin in its aspect of deliberate perversity. The Highest will have been sighted, and, thanks to the hereditary god-tendency in every man, " we needs must love the highest—when we see it." The Archdeacon based the whole of his philosophy of sin on the strength of that " needs must." It is an inescapable necessity born of Divine Immanence. Hence his Gospel of the " Christ-in-you " was, *ipso facto*, a Gospel of Triumph, in spite of setbacks deliberate or inevitable ; one may fall from the heights of vision ; perversity may corrupt obedience ; self-will usurp the throne of the Central Authority within ; but in the end the Divine must come to its own in the human soul, for Heaven is incapable of ultimate defeat.

For many persons this optimistic outlook seemed to weaken the sense of the " exceeding sinfulness of sin." It is true that with the removal of the idea of sin as an affront against an externalized God, committed always in clear realization both of act and consequence, went much of the terrorizing conceptions that have kept the soul in a kind of spurious rectitude, without touching the mainspring of conduct.

But this treatment of sin from the philosophical rather than the theological standpoint, far from weakening the moral sense, had the contrary effect of showing the real end for which the moral sense had come into being. The ultimate of conduct is character. Character is the expression of Immanence in terms of human life. It is not only God's vehicle of manifestation, it is the manifestation itself. In the higher reaches of character one is seeing as much of the nature of God as is possible to limited faculty. The imperative need for self-manifestation in God has brought humanity into being, that out of the environing conditions of its lot there may emerge that most perfect expression of divine process, the moral law. The end and fulfilment of that law is Love. In Love God has found a complete self-expression. In proportion as the Archdeacon's hearers grew in the realization of the tremendous implications of Divine Love, sin, or the deliberate failure to manifest God, became less and less conceivable as a maintained attitude of the life. Sin, moreover, was realized and shunned in proportion as the true Reality was sighted. " It is only as a man becomes conscious of his own divinity," said the Archdeacon, " as he realizes in thought that he, individually, is an expression of the Immanent Spirit, that he really

knows what sin is." "Love—and do what you please," was a safe mental attitude when Love had been recognized as the one mainspring of right conduct, and the one safeguard against concrete acts of sin. Given that virtue, and you have all the rest.

THE CHRIST: UNIVERSAL; MYSTIC; HISTORIC

CHAPTER IV

THE CHRIST: UNIVERSAL; MYSTIC; HISTORIC

THE dignity of human personality, and the high ends for which character is designed became central for the Archdeacon's teaching because of the light thrown by Immanence on the Incarnation. The nature and destiny of man are bound up with the nature and functions of Christ; we cannot study them apart. Nevertheless, in attempting an outline of the Archdeacon's highly individual presentation of the subject, the writer is conscious of the danger of crystallizing into cold, verbal definitions what to the preacher was Life itself. To intellectualize the doctrine of the Incarnation is to devitalize it. It is the fount of all that is really living in Christianity; to the Archdeacon it was certainly the master-light of all his seeing, the secret of that unnamable reality which characterized both the man and his ministry. The "Christ in you the hope of glory" was no mere

intellectual proposition, though he occasionally stated it as such; it was Eternal Life at the very core of a man's being, "closer than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet"; accessible, vital, responsive to the earnest appeal, by believing suggestion, of every soul in need, and capable, moreover, of being loved and sought *as Jesus*; for the Man of Nazareth and the Divine Immanence were of one essence. In Him the vital Principle in all things had arisen in fullness.

To define on paper that which is not a doctrine but an incommunicable Experience is only to court egregious failure, for when Life is imprisoned in syllables and letters we miss the very essence of it. Life, to be known, demands a mystic immediacy of experience, a fusion of two life-centres, compared with which definitions and creeds are but airy mental constructions for the confinement of a Reality which has evaded them. No one felt this more strongly than the Archdeacon. But he was so close to the hidden Centre of Life that all he said *about* it was the natural outcome of his contact *with* it. He had thus the very unusual power of intellectualizing the Life without destroying it; one felt that the philosophical shell was a natural and essential expression of the vital germ within. The part mentality played in his ministry was considerable,

otherwise this study could not have been attempted. It remains, perhaps, his undiscovered secret that his personal love, his one-pointed devotion to the Reality, glowed the clearer for its statement in terms of intellect. "Intellect and spirit," he says, "are by some supposed to possess separate provinces and unshared capacities, and they are so far on different planes that no spiritual revelation can be limited by the laws of mathematics. But, though the analogy is weak and imperfect, intellect is to spirit what the indicating machine in the telegraph clerk's office is to electricity. Intellect is the dial-plate upon which spirit manifests, and whereby the man judges, and after judging accepts or rejects the indications of spirit. Our Lord's words, What think ye of Christ? show intellect and spirit in their true harmony and relative positions. Judgment, He implies, will be clear and correct when the thinker is in the spirit". (*Speaking Good of His Name*, p. 92).

With these considerations in mind we venture with diffidence to present the Archdeacon's intellectual setting of a truth which was to him the crown and climax of all philosophy, as well as the very life by which his spirit breathed. The setting was individual, perhaps unconventional; it had besides the rare merit of being

consistent with fundamental principles. It aimed at stimulating his hearers' spiritual growth by a wise emphasis of the aspect of greatest value to life; above all, it sought to *universalize* the Christ. In all this, the note of personal devotion was never lacking. The Archdeacon knew the occult value of definiteness in thought and emotion, as in all else. He knew that thought and love directed to the "Infinite Originator" were rendered more effective for the worshippers if, within the Immensity we call God, a specific Focus existed upon which thought and love could centre; he knew that definiteness of response demanded definiteness and concentration of appeal. The "Jesus-Christness" of God, or the "Jesus-aspect"—to use a favourite expression—was the divinely provided human centre at which God and man could meet and be at-oned. It was perhaps the Humanity aspect of the "Infinite Intensity" which made tenderest appeal to the Archdeacon's very human heart. He keenly appreciated the philosophical difficulty of reconciling "personalness" with Infinity. "God is not *a* Person," he constantly affirmed; "He is universally diffused Individuality, conscious in all that is." But though God is not, in His unthinkable totality, personal, there is nevertheless "personalness" in Him.

He has, among others, the Humanity aspect which is one of His essential hypostases. "God's full Christ is Humanity." And again: "The Christ . . . is not one man, but the archetypal specimen of the Sonship of all men; and the future Christ of God will not be one man, but all men in Him". (*Speaking Good of His Name*, p. 96).

"The objective personality called the Christ is the visible embodiment of an attribute and potentiality which belongs to all; and that attribute and potentiality is—the Sonship germinal in all, and in the fullness of time to be born in all; for Christ is the Son of man, of humanity; and the imperishable secret of human life is "Christ in you the hope of glory". (Ibid. p. 97).

That God was Jesus, and that Jesus was man, therefore that God and man are of the same genus, and consequently inseverable, irradiated the Archdeacon almost with the light of a revelation. He could conceive of no higher message to humanity. "I confess," he once said, "that it came as a revelation that linked many perplexed meanings into one perfect peace when I saw that the thought colouring the doctrine of St. John was not so much the Divinity of Jesus Christ as that which I have sometimes ventured to express as the 'Jesus-Christness' assumed by the Divinity; not so much that the Man of Nazareth was God,

as that God became the Man of Nazareth ; not so much that the Sinless Sufferer was so Divine that He was received into God, as that God was so human that He revealed His ideal human characteristics in a special and exceptional manner under the flesh veil of the Sinless Sufferer. The perfect Divinity of the Logos Incarnate in the Lord Jesus is a truth, but one that seems, if His perfect manhood is belittled, to make Him remote, inaccessible, supernatural, different from the brethren of the Race. The perfect humanity of God, on the other hand, is suggestive of an active, helping, practical Deity, claiming, through community of nature and fellow-feeling, the homage and love and obedience of men. I think you will see the distinction ; to me is it real, profound, a distinction in essentials " (*Steps in Spiritual Growth*, p. 98). And again :

" If Jesus be, as some would have it, wholly distinct from us ; if the Christ and humanity are not essentially of the same genus, what becomes of the Easter message ? In that case the whole force of this glorious inference of assurance falls to the ground. If we are not of the same origin, the same nature, the same flesh and blood—we can apply to ourselves, and to our beloved who have passed from our sight, no analogy from His victory over death " (Ibid. p. 96).

Now what the Archdeacon terms the Humanity aspect of God is only another name for the Divine Immanental Principle indwelling the Race, or rather it is that Principle seen from another point of view. The whole Universe (as far as our planet is concerned) is a preparation for the coming of the Divine Humanity to perfection, therefore the motions of Immanence, in even the lowliest orders of life, are steps in the great Ascent. In the above quotations we have approached the idea from above downwards, and (abandoning space terms) it appears as a Transcendent Principle, essentially out of Time, which enters the manifested condition by specific embodiment. When, on the other hand, we regard it from the opposite or Immanental standpoint, then we think of it in terms of process. It is recognized as the vital principle behind evolution. We now find that we have exchanged space for time-terms. But in endeavouring to interpret the Archdeacon faithfully we have to do so, for he continually shifts the point of view. His desire was for the wholeness of Truth. Immanence was for him a statement of the workings of God *in manifestation*, and for that reason he stressed it. "God sleeps in the stone, dreams in the vegetable, wakes in the animal, is self-conscious in man, and reveals His moral nature in the Per-

fect Man," was a favourite dictum which showed the Incarnation to be in ordered relation with the Divine processes in other departments of the world. It is seen, in the light of this principle, to be the most natural, because the most inevitable event in human history. No miracle is required to explain the coming of ideal Manhood to fruition in the perfect Man, since His condition is the goal to which Creation is winning its slow and painful way. The miracle would rather have been if such an event had not happened. For the Christ, it must never be forgotten, though from our standpoint supernormal, is from His standpoint a normal spiritual being, following normal, spiritual laws. He represents the spiritual principle in the Race which will one day be manifested in humanity as a whole. He is not the contradiction of human nature, but its fulfilment. The past has tended to the production of animal-man ; the future will yield the man-god. As Browning powerfully expresses it :

> "All tended to mankind,
> And, man produced, all has its end thus far ;
> But in completed man begins anew
> A tendency to God,"

which is irresistible and unfailing, for it is the immanent, divine Life, impelling the soul to its high destiny.

Whether or not Immanence involves the idea of evolution for the human Jesus (and we think it does), the Archdeacon certainly taught that the Jesus-humanity will attain perfection by the way of process. "The need of the soul is not so much conversion as evolution—evolution of a deeply hidden germ whose power of ultimately conquering every hostile environment is involved in its very nature". (*Speaking Good of His Name*, p. 98). And again:

"We are built by the evolution of the divine germ within. Evolution is a slow process, but in His mind we are as He designed us". (Ibid. 132). This evolutionary idea, which is implicit in his doctrine of Divine Manhood, may be rendered clearer by a few explanatory remarks. Many grave questions necessarily arose out of the broad principles he so boldly enunciated—questions which were incapable of being fully elaborated by the very nature of the form in which they were presented. The one drawback to the raising of philosophical issues in the pulpit is the necessarily superficial treatment that can be given to them. Many persons might be doubtful if the progress of normal evolution can ever yield a Christ-humanity, and they might have desired from the Archdeacon greater clearness on this point. When he states that "man is built by

the evolution of the divine germ within," they might conceivably ask at what stage in the natural process of development that germ came into operation, what part indeed it plays in an evolution whose working principles are Adaptation and Natural Selection. It is well, therefore, to say clearly that his conception of evolution departed from that of Modern Science in many important respects. It was based on Immanence, and of Immanence Modern Science takes no account. The Archdeacon's doctrine of Immanental control in evolution modified the accepted teaching somewhat as follows :

It is conceivable, he might say, that in some far distant and never-to-be-repeated condition in the world's history living protoplasm first made its appearance as a high compound of nicely balanced anabolic and katabolic substances which, by the law of the Survival of the Fittest, became advantageously separated into individual masses, each eventually acquiring the structure of cells. But within these physico-chemical substances, guiding and shaping them to the tremendous end of the manifestation of consciousness, there must have been a Principle, selective, intelligent, impulsive, which progressively manifested in such degree as was compatible with the slow development of metabolic processes. From the

physical point of view its manifestations are a series of direct chains of reactions of gradually increasing complexity, and are conditioned by changes in the structure of protoplasm. But in saying this we have merely stated that it works invariably through physical conditions which are continuous with, though certainly not the cause of, psychical complexities. In other words, the shaping Intelligence awaits a point in the slow development of nervous matter at which it can manifest the higher aspects of consciousness. The qualities to be manifested have been in latency until the development of the necessary sensitiveness made their appearance possible. Nervous metabolism does not cause, it occasions them; they existed as possibilities from the earliest commencement of life on the planet, but given right conditions, they appear. The Archdeacon made their manifestation the *raison d'être* of the whole biological process, which is simply the elaboration of the dictum, "Let us make Man." He would have answered M. Bergson and others who deny Purpose to Nature by one of his favourite quotations: "There must be at least as much in the cause as in the sum-total of its effects"; sometimes overlooking the fact that Science, which bases its theories on Parallelism has very little to say with regard to

casual relations between matter and consciousness. Dealing only with processes, an end and a beginning are alike beyond its scope of inquiry.

It is clear, then, that the presence of a guiding Principle, slowly achieving in matter its predetermined ends, is "the little fact that makes the difference" between an evolutionary conception that is based on Immanence, and the purely chemico-physical theories of modern Biology. For the latter "chance" variation and Natural Selection are sufficient to explain the unthinkable passage of primordial protoplasm into man. For the former, the stages are guided in the interests of a Divine Principle for the fashioning of an ultimate instrument in which He can express His moral nature, and so justify the long, complicated, non-moral process by which nervous matter capable of eventually expressing mind has been called into being. This stage once reached, the limits to the expression of the guiding Principle in Its very highest aspects would be those only of Its own determination. It is conceivable that fully developed self-consciousness may, without the violation of a single evolutionary and biological law, be ultimately made the basis of a still higher order of consciousness, and a Christ-humanity be developed of whom the Pioneer was Jesus of Nazareth. Therefore it

would be quite true to say generally that man "is built by the evolution of the divine germ," more especially as the further and greater evolution of *character*, after man had fully emerged into the *genus homo*, is the guiding Principle's close and most intimate concern. Obviously the dawning of the day of the Perfect Humanity is as yet far off, and the details of its eventual progress, the kind of world in which its perfection will be accomplished, are necessarily hidden from us. But Jesus the Forerunner has given the Race this broad assurance that the state to which it may look forward in hope has been realized by a Pioneer Man who, because He was of like nature with all men, becomes the guarantee, the declaration, and the promise of an equal attainment by each and all of His brothers. This is the most misunderstood and least commonly recognized element in the Gospel of Christ. Its ground is intelligible, however, to those whose spiritual vision is keen. The Archdeacon saw this essential Christian truth more clearly than most of his contemporaries, and stressed it with utter faithfulness.

The emphasis laid on the doctrine of Immanence led to a further departure from accepted modes of teaching. It became necessary, for purposes of clearness, to differentiate between the

Christ-nature, the Higher Self in all Men, and its complete manifestation in the historic Christ. Hence the frequent use by the Archdeacon of such distinctive terms as the "objective, historic Christ" (meaning Jesus), and the "subjective, mystic Christ" (the immanent Spirit at the heart of all things, of which Jesus was the "specific manifestation for purposes of observation"). For some people the distinction was one that tended to confuse the Natures and divide the Substance. But to others it was logical, inevitable, and illuminating. It sought to avoid metaphysical difficulties by distinguishing between universal and particular in a philosophical manner rare in Christian pulpits; and by emphasizing the great truth that "God's Incarnation in the Perfect Man is the climax of His ceaseless operation in all men."

The distinction, which is of great use for purposes of analysis and exposition, is one of aspect rather than of essence; the categories of universal and particular are both true of the historic Christ. He is universal in that He embraces all as yet potential and embryonic Christs; He is particular in that Divine Sonship is not confined to His single personality. The Divine Logos, indeed, is ever one and undivided—this fact cannot be too greatly stressed—but He may have

diversities of *function*, and there are certainly vast areas of His Being that are not in manifestation (as we under the word) at all. It is permissible, therefore, to present Him as He appears to the limitations of analytical thought:

I. The Cosmic or Creative Logos in His Immanent aspect as: (A) The World-Soul, embodied in the Universe, and the moving Force behind evolution; (B) As the Mystic Christ, the Indweller, the saving Principle in Man, His Higher Self, the Divine Humanity.

II. That aspect of the Immanent Logos which is not limited to His manifestations in the Universe and Man, who "was before all things," and "overflows" the forms in which He is hidden—His Transcendent aspect, which is a necessity for thought, though beyond human conception or experience.

III. The particular or historic Christ, He in whom the Universal Logos sought separate enclosure for the purpose of manifesting God to men, and man to himself. He was the Logos under a human limitation. He corrected the vagueness of the Immanental conception, on the one hand, and the aloofness of the Transcendent on the other, giving personality to that which was indefinite, and accessibility to that which was remote. He was the reconciliation in a

human personality of both aspects, the point at which two seemingly irreconcilable Opposites met and became one.

It is vain, of course, to inquire into a mode of Being so far beyond the comprehension of man in his infancy. This, however, we may say in the interests of clear thought, that the Fullness of the Logos was able to descend upon Jesus because It had also moved within Him towards the fashioning of a meet vessel. In Christ Jesus the Transcendent Word had found a dwelling-place, and the Immanent Word a mode of self-expression. These two aspects of a Being which is essentially one—aspects which are isolated only for analysis—met in Him in complete perfection. Yet He was not the Logos in Its totality; the whole of the Logos could not be contained in one human vehicle, however exalted, however specially prepared; within the limitation, however, the manifestation was perfect.

The Archdeacon's pertinent distinction between Christ and Christ-Jesus was as though we differentiated between the air in universal space, and that portion of it that was enclosed in a test-tube for chemical analysis. The limitation would be by reason of the enclosing vessel, yet it was a limitation imposed by the necessities of the case. In the tube we had not all the air there was,

but we had air that we could deal with in a very special and peculiar way. The analogy must not be pressed, else we may be tempted to isolate in thought the human vehicle, the enclosing vessel, and reverently inquire as to the history of its development in time. The pre-existence of the Christ, the Eternal Word, is commonly accepted. What of the pre-existence of the human Jesus? May we say of Him, in the words of a modern Theologian, that "One had pre-existed as man, who as man had achieved all that was within the attainment of man, who as man had surrendered His personality utterly and entirely to God, so that it was able to be assumed by the Eternal Logos?" (*Mysticism and the Creed*, p. 264, by W. F. Cobb). Concerning this possibility the Archdeacon was silent, though his immanental and evolutionary premises seemed logically to require such a conclusion.

Since to many persons clearness of thought is essential to the apprehension of spiritual verities, a further exposition of the Archdeacon's great distinction between Christ and Christ-Jesus may be attempted from, perhaps, a slightly different point of view from the foregoing.

If we can conceive of a great range of individual Being, a Consciousness universally diffused, embracing all lower conditions; a Power energizing

in the hearts of men, seeking mightily to raise the individual life to the level of the Cosmic; a love which is ceaselessly transmuting sin by the forth-putting of its opposite, grace; a Presence never withdrawn which forms the bulwark of the world, working without haste and without rest at the silent and mighty task of drawing all men —nay, all things—unto Itself; a Being, in short, who is at once Cosmos and Man, Salvation and saving energy, above limitations, above personality, and yet more intimate, more compassionate, more wise, more perfectly, in a word, human than personality has yet revealed itself to be,—Divine in that there is nothing in the worlds of manifested being that is not put under Him, human in that the whole record and gleaning of æons of evolution has been carried up into Him to be retained in fullness for ever,—such a one is "Christ Jesus our Lord," in whom all treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden. God has brought all things to a head in Him; He is thus the climax of a continuous development; He unites in His larger being all lesser and imperfect states of being. He stands for the next step in development—or, to put it in Pauline phraseology, He is the New Creation. But we must carefully note that this is His state as "Christ-Jesus the *Lord*." It is not the state of Christ

as He was when, in Jesus, the God-inhabited Man of Nazareth, He emptied Himself of Cosmic Fullness, and accepted the humiliation of the flesh-body born of Mary. Our records give us the picture of the Eternal Word stooping to definite self-limitation in the Galilean Peasant; we have but the briefest glimpse—on the Mount of Transfiguration—of the Galilean Peasant raised to His highest Power, Jesus ascended into Christ, the vehicle triumphantly identified with the Fullness. That identification was certainly the ground of His spiritual consciousness during the thirty-three years of life in a Hebrew body, but it was not brought to full-orbed splendour of realization until the final liberation from flesh conditions.

The Universal Logos, the Cosmic Christ, existed before His manifestation in Jesus, since He was begotten of His Father before all Worlds." In Jesus He came into visible expression partly because He is seeking such expression in every man that cometh into the world, and partly because the laws of God demand that such manifestation should at times be given in fullness. Shall we put it that the Cosmic Christ became personified in Jesus? If so, then on the removal of the earthly condition of limitation the Jesus personality—the pure Hebrew vessel in which

the Mystery abode—was taken into the Fullness, expanding into That which was His true and highest Self. Because of His perfect self-surrender for the world's need; because, disregarding His own bliss of Being in the "form of God," He was willing to become empty that the Fullness might fill all men through Him; because of an active co-operation with Divine purpose which never ceased throughout His earthly career, and made Him far more than a passive instrument in the hands of God, His hyper-exaltation into eternal union with the Logos was achieved, and He became for all time Jesus Christ the Lord.

This, we venture to think, is the true inwardness of the Archdeacon's conception of the doctrine of the Ascension, which is the necessary corollary of the Incarnation. It is the "taking of the human nature into God." He treated it always in terms of consciousness. Incarnation and Ascension, Descent and Ascent, are not only complementary processes of Life generally, they are two simultaneous vital movements which are involved one in the other, centrifugal and centripetal forces of the spiritual life which obey what he was fond of terming the "law of Circularity." "I came out from the Father and came into the world, again I leave the world and go to the Father," is a statement that is true of the

spiritual processes of every man. "The coming forth into the world, the life in the world, and the ascension out of the world of the pattern Son, is a God-given prophecy of the life-progress and future victory and restoration of every son." (*Sermons preached in Westminster Abbey*, p. 148). The Ascension of the Christ, though portrayed by the Early Church as an aerial passage into a distant world, was in reality a passing into the "heaven-consciousness," wherein His love and power are blended intimately and for ever with the race which is in a very real sense His Body. Hence the Ascension is the climax and guarantee of Christian hope. The power of a perfected or "ascended" Christ is limited only by the dullness of His professed believers. "All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's," are the steps of the Apostle's assurance, but the keen edge of faith may be blunted by imperfect representation of the objects of faith, and the soul often lives below its privileges for want of a rational comprehension of their ground. A removed Christ in an "other-world" heaven cannot stimulate faith or kindle aspiration. But an "ascended" Christ who has attained the final possibilities of conscious life in God—possibilities which are alike the inheritance of the humblest as of the highest of the race—is at once an inspira-

tion, a promise, and a guide. For having ascended to a state of universal, conscious touch with all men, rather than to a place in some distant glory, He is not "so far off as even to be near." He has reached that ultimate, but completely possible condition in which there is no longer separation from any aspect of a related Universe. He is bound with all our bonds, and no human being is lower than He; so, also, we are identified with His glory, and no human being is less exalted than He from the view-point of the "ascended" consciousness.

Thus the "Ascending up of Christ to where He was before, not merely as Christ but also as Jesus," came about through no arbitrary decree, but through the very nature of things" (*Mysticism and the Creed*, W. F. Cobb, p. 268). It was the ultimate union, in an indissoluble identity, of the Cosmic Christ with the self of Jesus, an Apotheosis in which the human vehicle became transmuted into the Body of Glory, too fine, too spiritual, too all-embracing for further contact with the physical world. In this truly Cosmic experience the human Christ, now eternally blended with the Transcendent, is able to stimulate and guide the movements of the Immanent Christ in human hearts, and become the Saviour of men. He saves, not by propitiating outraged

Justice, or by imputing a righteousness which is His and not ours; not by imparting to man a divinity which is extraneous to their original nature, but by forthgiving divine influences which slowly transfigure the race from within. "The highest function of the objective Christ, the historical Jesus, is to bring the potential Jesus which is in every man to self-recognition." (*Steps in Spiritual Growth*, p. 162). The Archdeacon was crystal clear as to the importance of what he termed the "Jesus aspect" of God. Jesus was the crown of his spiritual philosophy. The Universal Christ could be known to the world as a definite, realized ideal of Divine Humanity only as He revealed Himself in One who was both guarantee and goal, the hope and promise of the race brought to a triumphant and unique climax in a Pioneer Man. Jesus focussed the Logos, who is ever seeking such definite self-expression in His office as revealer of God, and transmitter of heavenly influences to man. The essential need of God for self-manifestation is imperative to the full understanding of life—nay, it is life's very meaning and essence. May we say, too, that it is the doctrine of the Incarnation in a phrase?

Thus the Archdeacon's Christology sways between a close, not to say passionate, personal

devotion to the "Jesus aspect," on the one hand, and the more abstract recognition of the functions and implicits of the Mystic, Immanent Christ on the other. It was this latter recognition which explained his optimism and universal sympathy with all sorts and conditions of faith and non-faith. It made him truly one with every expression of life, whether sacred or secular, physical or psychical. There were neither barriers nor limits to the presence of the Mystic Christ; all work was His work, all godward aspiration and tendency the striving of His ceaseless energy, His age-long desire for self-expression. The following quotation sounds a fine note of warning lest, in our legitimate desire to honour the historic Christ, we limit the fullness of the Christ-manifestation to His one specific personality. "The Christ is universal," he exclaims in a fine passage; "He is not one man, but the Archetype of all men. He is the vital element through which all that is has its being, the common spiritual energy which has striven for expression in all the great historic religions of the world. He is the love-force immanent in matter and in men, whose purpose it is slowly to transfigure the dust of human generations into a temple of imperishable beauty for the habitation of the Eternal when the confusion

which now perplexes us shall have passed for ever. . . . Will it perchance be said of us, many spiritually-minded heathen sit down in the kingdom, and you, for all your orthodox creeds, and correct ceremonials, and intellectual knowledge, and stern denominational damnation of all who cannot see eye to eye with you, shall be cast out? What mean these scathing denunciations, this branding of men who differ as to methods as infidels, that we hear? God only knows one kind of infidel, and he is not the doctrinally inaccurate, but the unfaithful orthodox—the man who knows the Lord's will, and does it not; he is the *infidelis* who will be beaten with the many stripes. . . . Meanwhile we can universalize the Christ by enlarging our sympathies for all sorts and conditions of men; . . . we can force ourselves out of the narrow, cramping, social and religious circles which are pinching us into meaner souls every year we live; . . . we can turn faith into action, creed into conduct, orthodoxy into activity."

May we attempt to sum up what seems the essential feature, the element of deepest value in the Christology of St. John's pulpit? It is this; The divinity which in myself I perceive but fitfully, and know only by dim and broken glimpses, is in Jesus in complete and radiant expression. The laws He taught are laws to me, His joy in

Divine Sonship my heritage, because I am kin to Him. He may be to me divinest Master, nearest Friend, an all-pervading Presence of guardianship and power, a link imperishable with the Source of all life, because He and I are united in a common Selfhood. My true Self it was that lived in Him, and trod His symbolic path from Bethlehem to Calvary, and because as yet the true Self in most men is hidden and unexpressed, this manifestation of its powers in the fully-begotten Son of Man is of value incalculable for stimulus, guidance, and example. He is for all time the great Human Symbol, the Divine Humanity made manifest in a personality who, as Jesus, has caused us to see in daylight what we have glimpsed in dreams.

He, the objective Christ, becoming incarnate, dying on the Cross, rising, is the image, too, of the innermost subjective phenomena of man's being. Everything that is a copy of these inner experiences is liable to become a god to man. Therefore the deification of the sun on its daily and annual course; therefore the sun-myths, Pagan gods of every kind—all of them externalities of our internal being—move man profoundly. But because in the Christ physical-plane fact has been blended with ideal history, and the world has had a Mythos who was at the same time a being

of flesh and blood, His history has levered the world with a power greater than that of Paganism. Men have loved Him, and will love Him with a passion akin to madness, not only for what He is as an individual, but for what He represents to the dawning visions of the soul.

The true Christ of God is the transforming power of a new and yet essential nature, rather than one divinized Individual, external to the Race, whose appearance, "once for all," is a miracle from Heaven. That Jesus as an individual *is* savingly operative in the world to-day is a *sine quâ non* of the condition of which He is a forerunner; but a Christ who saves by becoming what in essential nature He is not can be no true Saviour of men. To blend His life with theirs, and so to infuse them with the force of His vital spirit, He must needs be of their spiritual kin. Therefore in coming to the Christ in His objective Jesus-aspect, we are coming to the real secret of our being, and voluntarily uniting our finitude and incompleteness with the God-nature which is our true and only *raison d'être*.

SACRAMENTALISM

CHAPTER V

SACRAMENTALISM

THE Archdeacon was a convinced Sacramentalist. As a professed High Churchman he could be no other. The Sacramental principle was to him the very essence of life in all its manifestations, and he presented it with an admirable logic which enhanced its spiritual dignity. But his Sacramentalism was Cosmic, that is to say, it was based on universal principles, and given a universal application. A sacrament is the focussing or specializing in external time and space relations of a truth of being which is ideal, universal, and beyond time and space. All universals must have their corresponding expression in microcosm, it is the law of life in manifestation. Therefore sacraments are the large "writ small," the whole focussed in the part; more: in a sacrament we are witnessing the actual translation of a higher order of being into a lower, without loss on the part of the higher, or visible change on the part of the lower.

For example: the natural and human orders are sacraments of divine activity in that they represent the coming into form and visibility of principles, potencies, and ideals which are not of the visible order at all, but which nevertheless demand expression in the visible for their fuller self-realization. Thus the Universe is a Sacrament of God, for therein abides His Immanence; to alter the figure, He becomes sub-conscious in matter. Man, too, is a Sacrament of God, since he is the outer expression of an inner, idea Self whose roots are in the higher world; in man God is self-conscious. In a peculiar sense, however, particular sacraments, authoritatively instituted and rightly celebrated, place us definitely in touch with immanent, cosmic energies. He who emphasized the Sacramental principle, and authorized its use, was in a sense the great human Sacrament, since He made manifest, in bodily conditions, the universal, invisible Power in its moral and personal aspect. In Jesus God was super-conscious. And the Eucharist is the Sacrament of Jesus. It is the extension of the principle which underlies the Incarnation. The universal Logos found in Jesus a life-centre in which He could be specially present without ceasing to be generally omnipresent; similarly Jesus Himself provided a "guaranteed contact-

point . . . not to make a Presence which was not there before, but specially to focus, at an agreed-upon and specific moment, in an appointed and guaranteed ordinance, the eternal truth of the Universal Presence" (*Spiritual Consciousness*, p. 182). It was His "parting legacy, His ever-present hand-grasp out of the Infinite." As the Logos could say of the Jesus vehicle "A body hast thou prepared me," so He, the impersonation of the Logos, could say of the simple elements of the Galilean meal, "*Hoc est enim corpus meum.*" The natural fruits of the earth were the media in the Sacrament of Jesus, as He, the human vehicle of the Logos, was the medium in a Sacrament greater still. Both the human vehicle and the natural elements preserved their essential nature while becoming the medium of union with a higher; this specific feature a sacrament is not, however, incompatible with philosophical Transubstantiation which is a fact—nay, the fact of facts. The Archdeacon's teaching on this point was suggestive and original, and carries us by implication into the arcana of personal mysticism. We venture therefore to quote him at length—

"All thinkers will follow me when I remind you that the cosmic mind, which is intensely intelligent, is sub-conscious mind; that is, it has

not initiative, but is keenly sensitive to suggestion. . . . Now Jesus was the specialization of the Infinite Super-conscious Mind, which is God. Therefore when He suggested anything to the cosmic, sub-conscious mind, His suggestion was instantly adopted. . . . When He took into His hands a Galilean loaf, and juice of the grape, and authoritatively suggested to the sub-conscious cosmic mind 'This is my Body,' the elements did not change their nature, they were always His body, always manifestations of the Creative Logos, but they became His body and blood, His substance and life, in a new sense; they became not symbolically only, but actually, the material means of conveying the grace which He had suggested. Now this I understand to be the effect of the consecration prayer upon the elements in the Holy Eucharist. The suggestion that the Christ made to the cosmic sub-consciousness when in the upper chamber at Jerusalem He instituted the Eucharist, remains vital in His Church; it is continued influentially, and attached to the word, action, and intention of His ordained representatives, who consecrate the elements. The substance that is changed in the bread and wine by the actions and the words spoken by the ordained minister, is not the substance of flour and water, and the juice of the

grape. The substance, the *substantia*, that is changed is the functioning of the thought-form that lies behind the elements, the thought that made those portions of matter what they were. The Super-conscious Mind, which is formative and creative, has suggested to the sub-conscious mind in the elements, which is sensitive and receptive, a new power, a new character, and they become vehicles of energies higher than those which habitually belong to them, and this is philosophical Transubstantiation.

"Everything in physical nature is what it is by reason of the immanence of a spiritual organism or mind-form which relates it to the Universal Mind. This mind-form being sub-conscious, is instantly receptive of any impression given to it by the Universal Super-conscious Mind, and if the Omnipotent Super-conscious Mind suggests to the spiritual organism immanent in any phenomenon of nature that its power of functioning is other than it appears to be, that in its action, though not in its appearance, it immediately becomes" (*Spiritual Consciousness*, p. 179).

Here we have a new and arresting restatement of the scholastic doctrine of Substance and Accident in terms of modern psychology. The preacher had evidently acquainted himself with the facts of occult physics; he knew also not a

little of the effect of ceremonial and " words of power " on the subtler planes of the Universe. He insisted on the paramount importance of the Eucharist as the " authorized ceremony in the due performance of which the world of sense and the world of spirit should touch and blend, and, as it were, overflow the one into the other " (Ibid., p. 181). The various details of the ordinance suggest its being far more even than this. Its marvellous symbolism points to a deep Sacramental process *within the communicants themselves* by which Transubstantiation of the heart and lower nature becomes an equal fact with the Transubstantiation of the natural elements in the sense indicated, and is equally necessary to the result. Both in the subjective and objective aspects of the Eucharist the method of the inner change is the same. The Super-consciousness in the worshipper, his immanent divine Self, says to the self-conscious " mind-form " of the personality, " *Hoc est corpus meum*," and suggests that henceforth its power of functioning shall be other than it appears to be. The outer man will remain what he was, but the alchemy of that all-potent spiritual suggestion from the Christ-nature will have changed his *motif*; he is for the time no longer a self-centred " mind-form," but a vehicle of life of another and higher order. This

is the true oblation "of ourselves, our souls and bodies" without which the primary condition of the Sacrament is not fulfilled.

The truth of Sacrifice as the ground of sacramental efficacy points again to the Eucharist as the great symbolic rite of life itself. For the essence of all existence that is rightly lived is that it shall be at-oned with a higher life that condescends to ensoul it; this at-one-ment, however, can be made only by the perpetual offering of the independent will. We observe a twofold movement in every act and event that is really sacramental; a higher and active force condescends to a lower and passive form (lower in the sense of being secondary to the controlling life); the form in its turn yields itself in an offering equally real, and the twofold sacrifice results in a mystic mergence which gives rise to a new order of life. Both the active and the passive give themselves to each other, and yet remain what they ever essentially are. The conditions of a Sacrament then will be: (1) The down-flow of a higher order of life into (2) a voluntarily yielded and receptive form; (3) material means of some kind to serve as a link between the two orders. Each of the seven great Catholic Sacraments, when examined, is seen to contain this threefold requirement.

Each, moreover, is sacred to one special truth of the inner planes, of which it is a perfect physical symbol. The Eucharist, it may be, covers the widest field, and points to the highest and most universal of all spiritual Mysteries. It is the Sacrament of Life itself, and of human life divinized and lifted to the Divine; it is, therefore, in a special manner the Sacrament of the Incarnation, and the application of its eternal principles to all in whom the Universal Logos has begun His work of mystic Transubstantiation.

If, with the Archdeacon, we consider Jesus as the "Sacrament of God," and if we have mastered in some degree the essentials of the Sacramental idea, we get light on the vexed question of the two natures united in the Christ, and the method of their union. Jesus has shown us the true nature of a Sacrament, but a Sacrament also explains to us Jesus as no dicta of Councils or disquisitions of Theologians have ever succeeded in doing. We are grateful, therefore, to the Archdeacon for his simple definition, as indeed for the freshest and most suggestive treatment of the Sacramental idea with which we are acquainted.

Very suggestively, too, has he shown us the truth underlying the sacrificial aspect of the Mass. Relieved of its cruder interpretation, it is possible to believe that the Atonement is re-

enacted in every Eucharist—but on the esoteric plane of meaning. Without at-one-ment between the two orders of life, there is no sacrament. But what of Atonement in its propitiatory sense ? Are Propitiation and Union really identical, or is not one rather the condition of the other ?

To be frank, the Atonement in its sacrificial and propitiatory aspect was not held by the Archdeacon save in the sense we have indicated. He realized that the only sacrifice man can offer to God is his own self-dedication. Herein consisted the supreme value of the tragedy of Calvary. The death of Christ was the culmination of a life of divine dying ; its merit was not the propitiation it offered to awful, offended Justice, but the exhibition of a will so perfectly in harmony with the Universal Divine Will that " humanity was potentially at-oned to God through the attained perfection of one member of the race." The law of spiritual solidarity provides that what one did, all did in the one. " Realized identity with the Divine Victim is the object to be attained, and that, not by copying a model or accepting a sacrifice, but by sharing a life. . . . Whereas the Jewish religion provided elaborate methods whereby the wrath of the Deity might be propitiated, the fundamental basis of Christianity is that Infinite Mind, being one with

humanity, needs no propitiation except the propitiation of His yearning for perfect vehicles for his self-manifestation in His sons, and that His sole and inexorable demand upon His children is the sacrifice of the human partial will to His indwelling and perfect Will". (*Spiritual Consciousness*, pp. 162–3).

We venture to think that so spiritual and enlightened an interpretation of the Atonement is an enrichment of Theology for which many will be grateful. The Archdeacon viewed all the articles of the Christian Faith in the light of process. Therefore the Atonement was vastly more than a solitary historical event that took place at noon one day on a hill outside Jerusalem. " It is not a single isolated propitiatory fact, but a demonstration, a symbol, of the process which takes place in the soul of each individual member of the race. . . . It is a manifestation of the Eternal Passion of the Immanent God, and we shall aim at recapitulating in ourselves the same perfectly yielded will . . . the same perfect at-one-ment of the human and the Divine ". (Ibid., p. 168). " Jesus saves you from sin by saving you from sinning, and . . . He saves you from sinning by training your thought to dwell habitually upon the transcendent fact that you are in your measure, as He was in full measure, a vehicle in whom

Infinite Spirit is realizing Himself, and that your body is ' a temple of the Holy Ghost '." (Ibid., p. 171).

To quicken this sublime realization, and further the Incarnation of the Universal Mystic Christ in all men is the secret of true Sacramentalism.

THE SECRET OF PRAYER

CHAPTER VI

THE SECRET OF PRAYER

IMMANENCE has practical aspects of the most far-reaching importance. The man who really believes that he has within him an inexhaustible fount of Divine energy, awaiting only the co-operation of his will and purpose, is on the road to great accomplishments. The most that God can give to man is the grace to *use* the grace he already possesses. God is ever seeking channels of self-manifestation in the human soul. The action of the Transcendental Self within, or, as the Archdeacon preferred to call it, the Christ-nature, is the source of Christian attainment in all departments of activity. Prayer, healing, the loosing or binding of sins, soul-awakening processes of every kind, not to mention the beneficient impulses of philanthropy, are all expressions and results of the pulsations of God's life within. In a very particular sense is this true of that peculiar form of Spiritual Dynamics we term Intercessory Prayer.

No account of the Archdeacon's work and teaching would be complete without some stress being laid on a department of Christian activity in which he was almost uniquely successful. Both the theory and the practice of Intercession were, we may almost say, his speciality, and will be markedly associated with his name as long as that name is remembered.

Intercession is distinguished from Supplication in that its object is always the welfare of another. It is based on an implicit belief in the solidarity of the race. Among its many surprising results, none are more striking than the phenomena of Christian Healing. The Archdeacon had an immensely wide experience of the possibilities of Healing that were set free by right methods of prayer, coupled with the sacramental efficacy of the Anointing Oil. He performed the rite in many cases with results that were Apostolic. On one occasion in particular, the writer remembers his requesting the congregation to accompany him in spirit to a certain house, at a certain hour, when he purposed to administer the Unction to a person in great danger. The collective thought of the people, coupled with the undoubted spiritual force of the Unction, effected a rapid restoration to health. In former years the Archdeacon had himself

undergone a like experience, which was the starting-point of the deep and lasting interest he took in all questions relating to Healing. Every body of Healers, from Christian Science, through the various schools of New Thought and Mental Science, to the more sober beliefs of the Church Guild of Health, claimed and gained his sympathetic attention; and although Christian Science itself did not carry complete conviction on metaphysical grounds, yet he had for many of its adherents a deep respect, and for much of its phenomena a willing belief.

The following letter in which he once gave his own testimony to the reality of Spiritual Healing will prove of interest to many—

DEANERY,
SOUTHAMPTON,
April 26, 1889.

MY DEAR SIR,—

I have no shadow of doubt that I was healed by the Lord's blessing upon His own word in James v. 15, but, as in so many cases, there was sufficient margin of time and possibility of change of tissue between the anointing and recovery to justify the sceptic in disconnecting the two, and therefore my experience is more for myself than others.

My ailment leading surgeons declared incurable, except by a severe operation which they said I could not bear.

While trying at the seaside to gain strength for the operation, the passage quoted was impressed with indescribable force upon my mind. I resisted it, and reasoned with myself against it for two months. I even came up to London for the operation, but the spiritual pressure increased until at last I sent for elders, men of God full of faith, by whom I was prayed over and anointed, and in a few weeks the internal ailment passed entirely away. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in mine eyes.

I am,
Faithfully yours,
BASIL WILBERFORCE.

This and similar experiences enabled the Archdeacon to teach the reality of unseen spiritual forces as one having the authority of *knowledge*. And he dared to make his knowledge practical, to bring into the affairs of daily life the powers of that inner world which was, in a sense, more real to him than the plane of mundane existence. Hence the intercessory Evensong for which St. John's, Westminster, became of late years famous, hence the peculiar teaching with regard to the

rationale of Intercession which one especially associates with these unique occasions. It is no exaggeration to say that on Sunday nights at St. John's miracles happened; the Archdeacon has often recorded the fact as a matter of course. The immanent Divine Love-Force was working through a specific channel—why then should miracles not happen? The miracle would rather be if they did not. It had been the Archdeacon's custom to devote this evening hour to cases of sickness and sorrow which had reached him during the week. Kneeling on the chancel steps in the lowered light of a hushed church, he would focus, as it were, upon each case of need the concentrated thought-power of the congregation, seeking first to realize the pulsings of an intense Presence which worked through the minds of all present, and was the energizing force in the Intercession. He sometimes pictured this Presence as a Golden Cloud enwrapping with indescribable love both those who prayed and those for whom they prayed. Then by an effort of the visualizing faculty he would build into the Golden Love-Cloud a mental thought-form of each case, taking care, however, not to visualize the troubles. It was a spiritual image of each, well, happy, and harmonious, that he endeavoured to build up, and to make as real on the outer plane

as it was assuredly real on the inner. "Intercessory Prayer," he was wont to say, "is *not* petition directed to a God outside of and separated from you and the object of your prayers; it is the liberation by your thought-concentration of divine forces of healing and help which would *not* have been liberated had you not prayed. You are not praying *to* God when you thus focus upon another the action of the Universal Spirit, —God is rather *praying through you*, setting free, that is, influences which He generates in the dynamo of your brain and heart. The process may be *expressed* by you in terms of prayer, but it is more strictly the direct action of Divine Love passing through you as a channel straight to the object of your intercession."

This was his method from the dynamic and active point of view; it had another aspect which was more passive, which sought the result by what he was wont to describe in a favourite expression, as "thinking into God." He has shown us this method in a sermon to be found in the collection that is called *Inward Vision*.

"Infinite Mind hears thought without a voice, He does not hear a voice without the thought. The highest prayer is a silent blending of the mind with the Infinite Mind. Divine Love reads the need in your thought, and mental

vibrations take the place of words. In intercession, for example, when you desire to draw some particular benefit, physical, mental, or moral, into the life of another who is ill or in trouble, just blend your mind with Infinite Mind, use your will to hold your mind in that attitude, and then mentally individualize the one for whom you desire benefit, repeating only the name, as Paul says more than once, ' making mention of you in my prayers.' " And again : " What a wonderful power is real, believing intercession, blending the human mind with the limitless Divine Mind ! We have seen it work what men call miracles. The Soul of Souls, the Infinite Mind, is the inmost element within us all. When some common interest deeply moves us, when we are all desiring the same thing, when we are ' in the Spirit on the Lord's Day,' this vital power is set free to work. What is it ? It is the loving will of the Infinite Immanent Spirit. It is not something from us that acts on God ; it is something from God that is acting through us, and the united current of purpose goes forth as a dynamic force, and acts directly upon the object for which we are praying. If we doubt, if we will not take our full place in God, if we withhold mental concentration, if we do not recognize the Divine Spirit in us, if we just

languidly repeat a request, and then think of something else, we hinder this divine outflow of spiritual sympathy, this wireless current of God's dynamics; in other words, we 'limit the Holy One of Israel' ". (*The Purpose of God*, p. 76).

" Intercession is mental causation on the spiritual plane. . . . Intercession does not mean that you have importuned an Objective Omnipotent Being to do a kindness to one of His subjects, though in human language we seem thus to express it. It is that, having found your true relation as an individual to the Originating Spirit, and being drawn to some special case of need, you open your soul inwardly to the breath of the Infinite, and God is thinking, willing, and expressing Himself through you. St. Paul knew the power of Intercession when he said, 'Brethren, pray for us.' He did not think God needed persuading by some one else to be good to him, but he did know that loving, sympathizing, healing thoughts, projected like wireless telegraphy vibrations from united God-inhabited hearts, were the life of God in man reaching forth to quicken and stimulate and support a brother man ". (*Power with God*, p. 13).

The results of this teaching, the practical outcome of the Archdeacon's Immanental philosophy, were to spread the fame of his interces-

sions throughout many lands. Letters came to him from every quarter of the globe, some of them recording instances of help and healing which could be dated from the very moment the intercession took place. Eventually he had to limit the number of cases to those who had some link of connexion with St. John's, and to refuse all anonymous requests, for which, for some reason, he could not pray. He was mainly successful where he could visualize strongly, and anonymous cases failed to touch his imagination. This fact is significant for those who seek to discover something of the psychology of prayer, and the relation of subjective factors to the end accomplished. Indeed, the Archdeacon's whole conception of Intercessory Prayer gives an incalculable importance to the part played by the individuals who offer the intercession. Whether they make themselves channels for the uprush of divine energy by active thought-concentration, or by passive blending of their minds with the Over-Mind of Love, the Divine Procedure is incomplete without them. Since *orare est laborare*, it may be true in prayer, as it certainly is true in work, that we are as necessary to God as God is to us.

The natural sequence to this thought is the imperative duty laid upon the individual so to

understand the laws that govern the human element in Intercession that this potent force shall no longer lie inactive for want of intelligent use. Intercessory practices are, of course, prevalent throughout Christendom, but they are not the power they might be for want of being properly understood. When individuals realize their great responsibilities as regularized channels of divine action, Intercession will then be undertaken in the spirit of *corporate co-operation* with the "Power that worketh in us," with results that are as yet undreamed of by the world at large. It has recently been said by one who is wise in things occult that ten minutes' daily prayer by every British subject during the war would be worth several army corps. The Archdeacon has gone further and declared that it would stop the war in a few weeks. That such prayers are offered daily in every parish in the Kingdom, with but small appreciable results on the great struggle, is a pitiful sign that Christian people have yet to learn the A B C of real Intercession. Many refrain from a natural repugnance either to petition or instruct the Almighty concerning a matter about which He is already fully informed. They feel, and truly, that Divine Love does not wait for our humble suggestions ere performing the best possible, both for nations and individuals

in the toils. But the deeper view of Intercession which regards it less as a petition to a God external to us than as a twofold process of human and divine interaction, both terms of which are essential to the result, removes some of the cruder difficulties, and presents the matter in a more helpful light.

The Archdeacon often referred to what he termed the "spiritual automatism" of answered prayer. The Infinite Soul and the human soul are so vitally, so intimately united that a prayerful turning of the mind godward evokes an inevitable response, under the universal law that "Action and reaction are equal and opposite." Spiritual response is the complement of human appeal; together they constitute two sides of one unbroken process.

> "Every whispered 'Lord, appear,'
> Contains the 'Here am I.'
> A special messenger doth stand
> Beneath thine every sigh.
> Thy love is but a girdle
> Of the love I bear to thee;
> And sleeping in thy 'Come, O Lord,'
> There lies 'Here, son,' from Me."

Automatically the down-flow of helpful influences meets and answers the initiating summons of need. Such reaction is invariable and constant,

because reciprocity is the law of prayer. It does not, however, follow that the surface-mind will always be conscious of the response; where prayer arises from deep stirrings in the subliminal self, the answer will be alike subliminal, and some time may often elapse ere the conscious surfaces are made aware of it. But when, by a well-directed effort of the will, we complete the circuit that flows from God through our own soul and bring it by a mental linkage into touch with some case of need, it is not we who are praying, but God who prays in us. Our separate impulse to pray is God fulfilling the divine purpose by our means. The Immanent Spirit who is in universal touch with every man knows the need, and the available channels for meeting it. We pray, therefore, not to an objective, external Being, but *in* the all-diffused Love-power of which the motions of our spirits are a part. That power is literally ours to appropriate and direct to a given purpose, and our frequent failure to effect results is often due to the ignorance and the selfishness with which we apply it to personal ends. Prayer is a natural, spiritual force which in the hands of selfish persons may be as dangerous as it is powerful. In other words, prayer is the linking of the divine current within the soul with the divine currents without, and the

force of a completed circuit is bound to command results.

That the Archdeacon himself was one of those rare people who possessed a genius for successful prayer has been shown by the almost instantaneous results which often accompanied his presence in the church. He knew, too, by a sure intuition those intercessions which he might not offer. He had also frequent foresight with regard to the ones that would be successful. This almost unfailing insight was due in great measure to his power of dismissing the personal point of view. He was completely free from anxiety or inordinate desire concerning the cases he presented ; his part was just to link, by intense mental concentration, the healing influences he liberated with the distant object of his solicitude, and leave the results with Divine Love. Two striking illustrations of success may be given.

Some ten years ago the mysterious disappearance of a well-known lady doctor was keenly interesting the public mind. The relatives of the missing lady went to the Archdeacon and asked him for a public Intercession. His answer was suggestive : " Do you know," he said, " the very dangerous force you are asking me to set in operation ? It may result in a disclosure which will be more painful to you than your present state

of suspense." They replied that certainty, even of the worst, was what they desired above all things. The Archdeacon consented, and on the following Sunday morning he asked the congregation for three minutes' silent prayer. "It is difficult to frame in words what I want you to say, you must settle that in your own minds ; but I feel myself perfectly certain that if we are only intense and earnest enough the great dynamic force of united prayer will at once clear up this horrible mystery." He was right. The discovery of the lost lady's body was made, as most people know, exactly three hours after the Intercession had been offered.

Another instance, almost equally dramatic. A young man had suddenly disappeared from home in unaccountable fashion, leaving no trace of his whereabouts. His parents, fearing serious trouble, appealed to the Archdeacon for help through Intercession. During his statement of the case in church, a lady in the congregation had a sudden clairvoyant vision of the young man in question, who appeared to be in a room in a Paris hotel, well in health but evidently in deep mental trouble. The experience lasted for a shorter period than it takes to tell, but the description which the lady was able to give of the hotel eventually led to the youth being traced to Paris

and ultimately restored to his rejoicing friends.

But after the war broke out all private cases gave way to the paramount duty of protecting by spiritual thought-power those members of the Forces whose friends desired their remembrance at these services. Right nobly, and with almost incredible success, was this work accomplished by the Archdeacon, though his failing strength often found the ever-lengthening list a formidable exercise in concentration and endurance. Nothing short of actual illness prevented him from undertaking what he considered the high privilege of providing spiritual defences for those who were fighting for our very existence as a nation, and truly the influences which were generated within the dull church walls enwrapped each man on the prayer-list with a protection which carried him unscathed through many a peril, and will, we believe, protect him to the end.

The circle he gathered around his chancel steps may or may not dissipate under other influences; it will, however, have done a work under his inspiring guidance the importance of which we are not yet in a position to estimate. For one thing, it will have demonstrated to an incredulous world that "miracles" may still happen where love is strong and vision undim-

med ; and, further, it will have shown that the " white magic " of the heart is the true antidote to the dangerous counterfeit, so commonly met with to-day, whose mark is the aggrandisement of self. The occult and the spiritual are sometimes divided into opposing camps, but the ministrations of St. John's, Westminster, have proved that the highest spirituality is compatible with the unselfish use of the inner dynamics of personality commonly termed " occult," and that the Unity of Nature sanctifies the right use of *all* her forces in the service of God, religion, and man.

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE VEIL

CHAPTER VII

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE VEIL

NO study of the Archdeacon's distinctive lines of thought would be complete without some reference to his "other world" beliefs, and to the attitude he took up with regard to the vexed and insistent question of Psychic Research. There is room for much freedom of interpretation in the Church's Eschatological teachings, and Death, Judgment, Heaven, Hell had meanings for the Archdeacon which were certainly subversive of much current Theology. The Day of Judgment was the day of death; it was personal, mystic and interior, and had little affinity with the popular view of a last Great Assize when, amid the crash of dissolving worlds, the historic Jesus descends to pass final sentence on the race of men. Similarly with the doctrine of an eternal Hell. Enough has been said of the Archdeacon's attitude of absolute Universalism to make his teaching on this point unequivocal; he never wearied of protesting against the God-

dishonouring conception of a Hell that was merely useless torture. Very characteristic was his action on one occasion when the writer brought him a High Church Manual dealing with after-death conditions of a more than uncomfortable character. Walking to the fireplace he laid the pamphlet on the coals, saying in his sternest manner, "I have much pleasure in cremating that damnable little book." Yet it must not be thought that his theology of Absoute Love had no place for necessary, after-death discipline. We have tried to make this clear in a previous chapter. None more relentless than he in his recognition that effects must always follow causes. Lest he should be accused of laxity with regard to moral penalties, the following noble words may be quoted:

"I am told by the unco-orthodox that it is dangerous to accentuate the Love of God and omit His other attributes, lest men should reckon too much upon the indulgence of the Almighty. . . Did it ever occur to these cavillers that the only element in the Divine nature to fear is the inexorableness, the perfection, of His Love? It is at once the glory and awfulness of the Creative Love that it is irresistible, it 'never faileth.' The one everlasting impossibility to man is to elude the Love of God. Anger might possibly

be propitiated. Outraged justice might accept satisfaction and apology. Love cannot be propitiated or cajoled, and does not cool down. 'Love never faileth,' and will irrevocably and irresistibly fulfil its purpose. Assuredly there is here an aspect of our relation with God calculated to arrest the attention. Are we responding to this Infinite Love? 'If thy hand offend thee, cut it off. . . . It is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into Gehenna, into the fire that never shall be quenched.' Though this orientalism is highly figurative, this consuming fire can never be quenched because it is the fire of Love, and many waters cannot quench Love. And it is only Love, absolutely perfect Love, that has strength of purpose to carry through the ultimate remedial operations which may be necessary for the salvation of the wilfully impenitent. It is only perfect Divine Love, immanent and transcendent, that can go into Hades with Dives and purge him from the flesh accretions that have drugged his conscience and smothered his spiritual being". (*Spiritual Consciousness*, p. 40). The only true Hell, then, is the fire of a love so universal, so tenacious, so irresistible that the most stiffened impenitence, the most defaced and ill-builded character becomes, under exposure to

its relentless purification, remelted and reborn. Man's perverted freedom may take him very far from the end of his being, but there is one thing it cannot do, and that is to defeat Omnipotence. God has *willed*—a strong word—that all men should be saved ; can man will himself out of that universal category ? If so, he is greater than God.

The teaching of the ultimate perfectibility of man necessarily involved inquiry as to his progress in future states of being. It is clear that Process must be continued beyond the grave, since we win but little way to perfection in the kindergarten school of earth. In speaking of the great destiny of man the Archdeacon had these future stages always in view as possibilities. To him, indeed, they constituted life in what he sometimes termed its postgraduate courses. Of the actual conditions of that more widely extended education he did not, of course, speak dogmatically. But Paradise was for him the state in which all that is unworthy will be checked, and every beauty of character which we have admired on earth will be developed to its highest capacity. " The future condition will not be a system of external penalties or rewards administered by a despotic ruler, but the automatic expansion under new conditions of

the prevailing bent of our present life. The germs of the new, and perhaps more severe educative training under a changed environment, which some will experience, or the progressive joy of an ever brighter knowledge of God which will be the reward of others, are within us now, evolving in one direction or the other, and this evolution is very greatly under our own control". (*There is No Death*, p. 21). "Paradise is the training school for character, progress, development, ripening and spiritual advancement". (Ibid., p. 16). In it there must be different planes of attainment; such planes are not localities, but conditions. "Heaven is heavenly-mindedness," he was fond of asserting; "we have not to leave the world to enter the 'rest that remaineth for the people of God,' since it abides deep within us, and *is* the Immanent Divine Essence whence we originate. The way to heaven is through heaven, and heaven is the development of the heavenly nature."

Moreover, from this heaven-germ within a new "body" is to be evolved for our use in the other dimension of being. It is, in fact, within us now. Just as our physical bodies were constructed by the Immanent Logos before we were conscious, woven with wondrous intelligence out of the warp and woof of ancestral

experience, so the same Divine Indweller is slowly fashioning, out of Himself as germ, the new clothing, the "non-atomic enswathement" of the immortal spirit. This is the true "Resurrection Body," but it has little in common with the resuscitated corpses of current belief. Scripture nowhere tells us that our physical bodies shall rise again. St. Paul, indeed, is almost wrathfully contemptuous of those who held such an idea. "Thou fool, thou sowest not that body that shall be." We rise, it is true, but *from* the physical body, at the moment of that body's dissolution. The Resurrection is predicated of *us*, and not of it. The same truth the Archdeacon fearlessly proclaimed with regard to the Resurrection of Jesus. He rose, not out of any tomb, but out of the body which He left hanging on the Cross. He Himself never entered the sepulchre in which His body was interred. Dematerialized, disintegrated by perfect knowledge of a natural law as yet undiscovered but which may one day control the terrors of corruption, His physical body went the way of all flesh, while He Himself "materialized, by thought-power, from the condensed atoms of the ether, those post-mortem appearances which were different on each occasion as His thought of Himself differed". (*Spiritual Consciousness*, p.

48). This was the Archdeacon's conception of the Resurrection from its material aspect; the great fact to be taught by such manifestations was that for such an one as He death had no hold or power. He had conquered life; still more was He master of the fiction known as death. And for us also is it true—this fact that He so gloriously demonstrated by His calm survival of Calvary's tragedy—for us resurrection after death is the survival of consciousness and individuality in an appropriate vehicle, through ever-progressive stages of persistent life.

The deathlessness of life is, of course, a main tenet of the Christian Creed, but there are few of its official exponents to whom that tenet is the primary reality, the central thought of every public utterance. The Archdeacon, if one may be allowed the expression, "specialized" in the doctrine of the after-death life, partly from a strong natural leaning towards the transcendental, indicative of the possession of psychic powers of no mean order. He himself told the writer that the late Stainton Moses once emphatically advised him against the cultivation of these faculties, seeing intuitively that he had work of another order which might have been hindered by the necessary restraints incidental to psychic training. His interest, however, in Psychic Phenomena led

him to pursue very careful and prolonged investigations into a subject which arouses, even to-day, strongly adverse opinion in his own ecclesiastical milieu. In spite of this, he dared to acknowledge openly the value of the phenomena as allies in the war against materialism and unbelief. This does not alter the fact that his attitude towards these things was one of caution rather than of enthusiasm. His zealous temperament was balanced by a strong measure of critical faculty, and he would pause to weigh evidence even in cases where his inner sense was already convinced. It is true that he had sometimes good reason to discredit communications that came to him from psychic sources ; it is also true that he had responsibilities towards many who, at a word from him, would have rushed headlong into a subject which they were temperamentally unfitted to investigate. But for the right people he opened many a door into the other world, and brought healing and comfort to countless stricken hearts by the assertion, based on forty years' experiences, that the " dead " and the " living " may touch hands across the gulf.

To one who, like the writer, enjoyed a long friendship with the Archdeacon, and knew something of the inner movements of a mind that habitually saw Truth from many standpoints, his

seemingly contradictory attitude towards psychic matters awakened no surprise. An exceedingly judicial outlook led to occasional inconsistencies, in which he would publicly discredit what he privately allowed. But the inconsistencies were more apparent than real. He felt that to a very large extent the delicate and difficult work of Psychic Investigation should be in the hands of specialists, or of those whose instructed judgment and sound mental organization would be an assured safeguard against deception and disaster. Many people mistook his large exercise of discrimination for an unjustifiable temporizing with a great subject. They were very much in error who so misjudged him. It is not too much to assert that during the latter years of his life, and especially since his own overwhelming loss, these things had become his master interest. Every conversational road led, sooner or later, to the all-important subject, when one would feel that here the Archdeacon was, so to say, in his own world. " I live so much more in the other world than in this," he once confessed, " that nothing here really seems to matter." And yet this glowing sense of reality, this passionate absorption in things beyond the low reaches of the senses, was not incompatible with a vivid interest in current affairs, both national and personal. If it be

true that " nothing really matters "—and to him in the stern solitude of his spirit this *was* true—the sympathy which had always made the joys, sorrows, and interests of others his own was no whit abated by the knowledge. The Archdeacon loved this world to the end, though in his heart's depths he lived in another.

Equally intelligible also was his mental attitude towards those evidences of psychic manifestation which he sought so eagerly and derived from sources so various. " Personally, I want none of them," he would say, in his strong, decisive manner, after some particular disclosure of psychic interest seemed to have contradicted the assertion. It was nevertheless true : he wanted no proof of the reality of the Unseen which, to him, had become the normal element of life, but his wide mind in its strong objective aspect welcomed evidence, and criticized it impartially. He was in contact with many psychic sources through whom a variety of communications were transmitted, all of which interested him deeply, and many of which he accepted. The ordinary grounds of clerical opposition had no weight with him ; if communication was a possibility, and the unseen world an inner extension of this one, religion will have nothing to lose and everything to gain by a fearless recognition of facts.

No aspect of a Universe governed by law is outside the scope of legitimate and reverent investigation. Yet the deep spiritual communion with those who had had his heart's affections existed independent of outer aids. In the vivid realization of the presence of Divine Love—an exercise in which he had trained himself to great proficiency—he hoped to find all those lesser presences whom he had loved long since and lost awhile. And he had, too, a method of invoking a loved presence by thought-concentration and visualization, in which he intensely believed.

In earlier years, when his strength permitted, it was his custom to make the Festival of All Saints a special corporate attempt to blend the minds of his congregation with those friends who had recently passed on. The power and beauty of this gathering made it one which few of his followers willingly missed. The lowered lights against the dark, panelled background of the chancel wall; the kneeling, white-robed figure on the steps, his rapt ascetic face, and sensitive, magnetic hands seeming to penetrate into a hidden but very near world, between which and the world of flesh he acted as a link and mediator—how strongly etched into the memory are the details of this annual service, which was to many an occasion of real union with invisible friends,

and a realization that for love and thought Nature has no barriers in any of her kingdoms. During a poignant silence each member of the congregation would follow the instructions of the Archdeacon to concentrate into a visualized thought-form the special presence which each desired to realize, the power of visualization, in which he specially excelled, being, in his opinion, a very real means of *rapport* with the invisible world. He was entirely liberated from the Protestant superstition of the futility of prayers for the dead, and regarded such practice both as a privilege and a duty. In this respect he exceeded the beliefs of most persons who follow the Catholic custom, since he held that it was possible not only to pray for them but to speak to them. For he knew that Immortality is other and greater than mere Survival. It has a qualitative aspect which the other has not; it is independent of time and bodily change; the laws of Becoming do not touch it at all. Being of the spiritual and not of the temporal order, its possession enables us to participate already in the deathlessness of those we loved who have passed on. They can touch us in the Spirit by virtue of the common life we share with them. This is the basis of the Communion of Saints which to the Archdeacon was only another form of the

doctrine of the unity and inseverability of life. "Communication," he was wont to say, "is uncertain, and not to be generally trusted; Communion is based on the certainty of the omnipresence of God, and is therefore unfailing. Communication depends on external channels; Communion results from an exaltation of the spiritual consciousness."

The special method adopted by him for blending the spirit with a loved one on the other side has been of incalculable value to many for whom the external methods of the séance-room do not appeal. We will describe it in his own words.

"I would suggest, if you would seek communion with one 'loved long since and lost awhile,' that instead of going to a séance you should put aside a quiet time to place yourself into a mental attitude of thought-concentration. Think yourself into a consciousness of the Presence of God. 'Be still and *know*' that you are alone with God; then, as you suffer no other image to enter your mind, make an affirmation, 'God whose name is Love is the all, the only substance; whoever mentally touches God touches the all, for at the centre of the being of all, in whatever world they are, is God.' In that attitude your mind is functioning for the time wholly from the spirit, the Christ-mind, which

Paul says we all have. Then, if you will, repeat the name of that one in spirit-life whom you want, and breathe to God a desire for that one : 'Abba Father, may the vibrations of my love reach that dear spirit, and grant to that one advancement and happiness and close union with me' ; then address the dear spirit directly, say what you will. Do you doubt for a moment that you two are then mentally and spiritually blended ? Why, even in these earth limitations it has been proved that thoughts from the mind of one can be conveyed to the mind of another ; how much keener and more penetrating must be the mental powers of those who love us and who are no longer hampered by the physical body. I am certain—yes, I may now say I am *certain*—that the spirit-being we love, and whom we have thus invoked is able to help, quicken, illumine, and console us ; and though visibly and audibly unmanifested, we may be sure they are saying to us the very words of our Lord's farewell promise, 'I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice' ". (*There is No Death*, p. 63).

The Archdeacon's most useful and successful work since the outbreak of the war was to give to crushed and hopeless hearts an assurance of the continued survival of those who had lain down their lives for their country. In this

special task he utilized with great success the countless evidences to this fact which have been coming, through psychics, during these tense months of war, and was able to lift from many a spirit the heaviest burden that can be borne—the weight of a supposed eternal loss. Mourners too could express to him their natural and insistent desire for touch with those beyond the veil because, knowing the facts, he was free from customary prejudice, and could bring wisdom to bear on matters concerning which there is a crying demand for wider knowledge. At the same time, he always kept in mind the limitations of our growing faculty, and tempered psychic enthusiasms with a wise caution.

CONCLUSION

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FUTURE generations will appraise Archdeacon Wiberforce more justly than we can do, who are still influenced by the memory of his compelling personality. In the foregoing pages we have endeavoured to outline the more prominent ideas with which his name will always be associated, and to indicate the main features of a ministry which was in some respects unique. In conclusion, let us summarize in a few words those elements in his teaching which are likely to be of lasting value. Archdeacon Wilberforce undoubtedly owed his power, apart from personal gifts, to spiritual insight of the first order. It is not too much to say that he "saw God." The light of that seeing made religion, in his hands, no longer the poor, parochial, departmental thing it is for many teachers : he gave it space, breath, and expanding room ; he made it, in short, universal. His great aim undoubtedly was to raise the current God-conception to a higher and more inspiring level. But he was

also a Pioneer. His " eyes looked right on " to a time in the rapidly changing course of human thought when religion must also participate in the inexorable upheaval of reconstruction.

Confidence in the immutability of the " Faith once for all delivered to the Saints " will not stay the onslaught of those forces of regeneration that are even now at the Church's gates. " It is true," the Archdeacon once observed, " that the Faith stands for ever, but the *expression* of the Faith must change from age to age." The body of a creed is no more immutable than other bodies ; like all else in a world of change it obeys the laws of growth and decay, and should adapt its form from age to age to suit the intellectual and spiritual needs of its day and generation. Twentieth-century Christianity should, therefore, be the last and the fullest development of the truths of the Apostolic age. The partial standpoints that satisfied our forefathers must in the very nature of things become as old bottles to the new wine of a purified and widened God-conception. Because the Archdeacon was among the few who realize that the world is demanding, in accordance with the laws of progress, a new and appropriate clothing for the " Faith once delivered," he endeavoured to give to the old teachings a leaven of potential expansion. The

value of his work, judged from the standpoint of posterity, will therefore consist in what it contains of broad, universal principles of interpretation, which the coming reconstructive era will find of immense theological fruitfulness, given right conditions of soil, and assiduous and wise cultivation. As seed-thoughts bearing promise of a rich and satisfying harvest in the days to come we have treated those elements in his teaching which were in advance of current beliefs. More than this we think he would not desire that we should claim for them. He constantly said that he was but commencing a work which others would be called upon to develop and bring to completion. He was, of course, by no means the sole worker in this field. Much that he said was original to himself, but in much else he was but the fearless, splendid, and eloquent mouthpiece of long generations of mystical thought which came as new teaching to his hearers because it is remote as a rule from an Ecclesiastical milieu. Even if it might be said of him, as Montaigne once said of himself, " Gentlemen, I have here made only a nosegay of culled flowers, and have brought nothing of my own but the string that ties them," we have still to remember that the binding, arrangement, and grouping of the nosegay are only of secondary importance

to the flowers themselves, and call for trained and original artistry. The Archdeacon had far too receptive and truth-loving a nature to object to confessing that he was debtor in thought both to the Greek and the Barbarian. But the gleanings he acquired from without were impressed by the stamp of a strongly individual mind, whose originality lay in its skill in arranging, presenting, and making *vital* truths which are as old as the human heart.

The main theme of the Archdeacon's pulpit utterances was to vindicate the ways of God to men. Did he succeed ? His basal doctrine of the Divine Immanence ceaselessly active in human affairs threw light on many questions which from the conventional point of view appear insoluble. Especially did he apply his touchstone to the vexed problem of moral evil and pain. To say that he was not entirely successful is only to state that that problem has yet to be solved by a further knowledge that will cast a searchlight over the past as well as the future. At present we have very few of the factors, and must perforce restrict the inquiry to the limits of actual experience. Nevertheless, Immanence eases for us the agony of the problem.

Another of the Archdeacon's favourite emphases may also be cited as helpful. His doctrine

of a suffering God who has voluntarily laid down His life in Creation, and in all its afflictions is afflicted ; who, suffering in the All-consciousness, knows pain in a way in which we cannot know it who suffer only in the each-consciousness, adds dignity, importance, and solemnity to human ills. Mr. H. G. Wells has made the conception familiar to many who are not theologians. But the difference is immense between his finite God and the Archdeacon's conception of an Infinite Love-Force who is *voluntarily* self-limited in Creation. We see dimly that some contraction of Infinity is necessary to make a world, and the Archdeacon's wise implication that so vast a sacrifice must be ultimately justified in the result takes us as far, perhaps, as we can go with our present knowledge. We are, at all events, ages beyond the conventional Deistic framework of the problem. We know now that God is not separate from man or from any aspect of His Universe, but that He has somehow involved His very Being in a world-scheme which is, in truth, a slow unfolding of Himself from Himself into an ultimate splendour which our reason bids us infer, but which our imagination cannot even dimly conceive. In the meanwhile the thought that our tiny pains reach and touch the Heart of the world before even they reach ourselves removes the

loneliness from sorrow; in so wondrous a fellowship sorrow may even seem worth while.

But perhaps the Archdeacon's thought was greatest when it was most simple. How exquisite were his ethical inferences from Immanence those knew who had proved their truth by action. Life had only one practical meaning for him: it was to manifest God. The "imprisoned splendour" yearned to escape into the freedom of human activities. God *wants* us. To satisfy the eternal passion for self-expression independent life-centres have been called into being in which He can realize Himself. Each individual has thus a unique value, since each represents a special aspect of the Indweller sacred to himself alone. Thus the Archdeacon brings his spiritual philosophy (which is not, of course, peculiarly his) down to the flesh-and-blood level, and bids it prove its truth in the busy ways of men. No action is too small for the Indweller to make His own, and to brighten with an indefinable beauty. For He claims the whole of life, and only as it is offered as a channel for the outflow of His Spirit will it realize the purpose for which it was given.

The thought is not new, but the Archdeacon stamped it with the impress of a life that had proved its truth. It would be impossible to find within the ranks of definite theologians a mind

more free than his from boundaries, more open to the quickening breath of Truth, from whatever quarter it might come. He had no sacrosanct theological prejudices, no special taboos, no closed thoroughfares, no partisan susceptibilities, no mental drawn blinds. Although there was little about life that he did not know, his faith in man grew brighter with the years : even the calamity of a European war was incapable of darkening that divinely-rooted optimism that saw God equally in the clash of conflict as in the benignities of peace. He faced every question from an unshakable belief in the illimitability of Divine Love, and was for this reason one of the truest Christians in a Church which is sometimes apt to forget that she was founded to teach Christianity.

On the anniversary of his passing these last words of affectionate reminiscence are penned. It is only with the flesh that we feel his loss. He is with us still, greater than we dreamed who saw him through the lovable limitations of the outer veil, ever the tender friend, the wise counsellor, the brave-hearted fighter for struggling causes ; in a sense more truly ours to-day than he ever was, for, in the words he chose for his resting-place in the Abbey Cloisters, " He lives, he wakes ; 'tis Death is dead, not he ! "

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